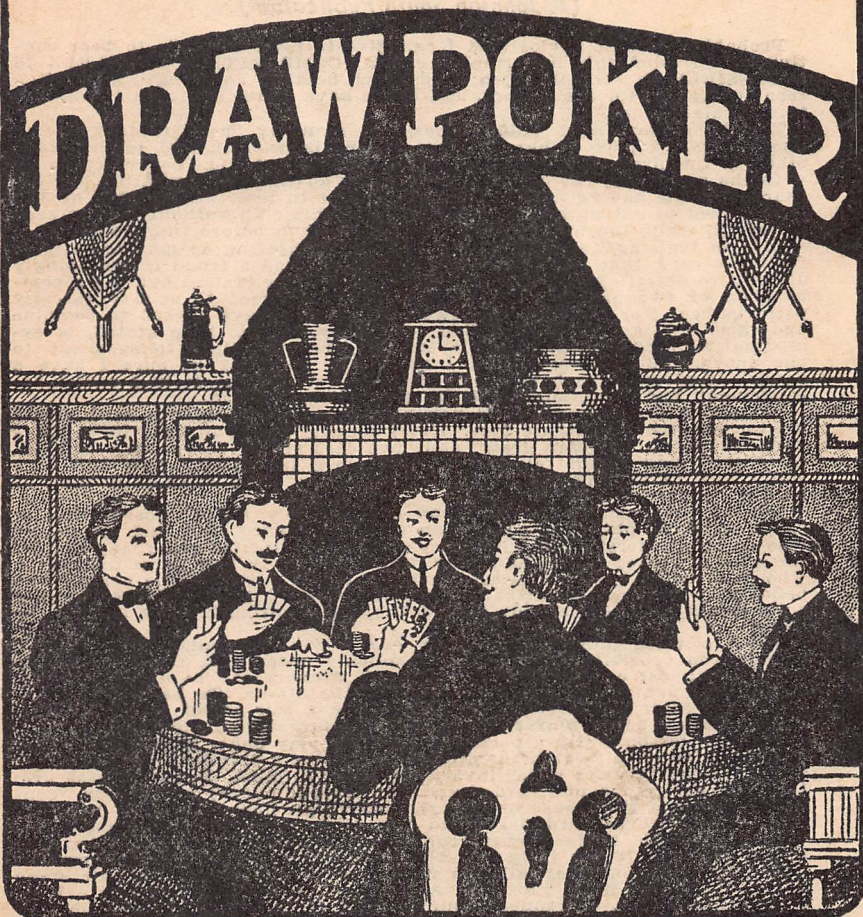


HOW TO WIN AT DRAW POKER



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How to Win at DRAW POKER

(A Johnson Smith Publication)

Probably the best advice that I can give to my readers is to bear continually in mind this important fact: **NO COMBINATION OF CARDS IS IMPOSSIBLE IN POKER.** Two hands, each holding Fours have been often seen struggling for the victory, and Fours have more than once succumbed to a straight flush.

Two hands may each hold flushes, and standing "pat," that is having good cards, (a perfect hand, before a card is drawn), and raising each other in the first stage of the game. In Poker, position has much to do with the game, and the dealer has only this advantage of position, for the chances of his having a good hand, so as not to lose the one chip he has been forced to put up are small. He wagers his chip without having seen his cards, while the others know what they have before they come in.

It is in "raising," entirely apart from such cheating as may arise from forcing a card, that fraud in poker is possible, and a fraud is exceedingly difficult to detect. A player may be "forced out" or "raised out" by a combination of two players who have previously agreed to such a rascally performance. For example, any two players may have agreed to combine and raise out other players. This conspiracy, as has been stated, is exceedingly difficult to detect. Players have not the right to even say to one another in private, "When I raise you, you may be sure I have a hand." It gives to each of them an undue advantage. It is a secret arrangement, and being such is nothing else than a fraud.

Variations of draw and stud poker from the standard five card games are too great to enumerate here. Every locality seems to have its favorite variation from "five card draw" and "five card stud." In one city "spit-in-the-ocean" may be the reigning favorite; in a second city "low hole card wild" may be getting the biggest play while a third community may be hailing "deuces and treys wild."

One of the variations which has exceptionally "wild" possibilities is "high and low" played in connection with seven card stud, and the novice who doesn't understand the intricacies of this particular game may be "in" for a lot of money before he learns its technique. In this game the person who believes he has the lowest hand can wager just like the person who believes he has the highest hand. In other words, 6, 4, 3, 2 and Ace of mixed suits would be a perfect "low" hand, the Ace counting high or low in this game.

When a third player believes he has a winning hand—or perhaps a fourth—the possibility of raising is quickly seen. And the two players who are almost certain they have "sure" winners can be depended upon to get as much money as possible out of the others. To be "caught" between the high and low hand while holding a fair set of cards is something which a poker player is not likely to forget very quickly.

The first lesson which a person learning to play poker should constantly keep in mind is to "watch the draw." There are a few simple rules which a person who "always wins" invariably bears in mind. Some of these are: 1. Never bet into a one card draw (in straight poker) unless you "connected" with a full house or an extremely high flush. 2. If the "opener" bets after a three card draw and you have made threes yourself, but under tens, call. If the opener "connected" to jacks or better he has you well beaten. 3. If you have two big pairs and the person who drew one card BEFORE you bets, call. He may be trying to make two pair stand up also. 4. Don't hold "kickers." A "kicker" usually is an Ace or a King with another pair. It reduces your chances of catching a "third" one by many, many hundreds. 5. Don't try for a "belly catch" when luck is not with you. A "belly catch" is the "in between" card missing from what otherwise would be a straight. 6. Don't try to make a flush on a two card draw unless you are having sensational luck. If you make one a week and play every evening it is just about the average number of times such a thing happens.

The Poker Book

INTRODUCTORY

THE task of setting down the actual rules for playing the game of Draw Poker is not a very difficult one. By strict adherence to these rules, anyone, with a fairly good memory, may become a safe Poker-player: that is to say, let him play, say, twenty games, and be governed entirely by the laws of probabilities, his losses will be small, his winnings small, and it will be entirely a question of his luck whether he comes out ahead of the game or behind. To be a good Poker-player a man must possess certain natural gifts—he must be a good judge of character and of other people's dispositions, and, above all, he must have patience: without patience he will never excel. He must know when to be cautious and when daring, for whereas, in most other games of skill, it is a question of one man's science against another's in Poker it is one man's nature against another's.

Draw Poker brings out a man's characteristics perhaps more than any other game, and yet the object of the player should be to conceal or mask his characteristics as much as possible. An onlooker at a game of Poker has a rare opportunity of studying dispositions and human nature. If he watch long enough, he will be able to observe the way a man takes both success and reverse. He will see one man who, when winning, is laughing, talking, and cracking jokes at the expense of the more unlucky players. The same man, when losing, will probably get out of temper, and abuse those whom he chaffed before. Avoid him, if possible—he is the most unpleasant sort of man to play with. There is usually a quiet, timid man in the party; he does not say much to any one, and never makes any startling play: he is well up in the rules, and usually knows about what his chances are of winning by making this or that play. He is one of the safe players. He will never win or lose much, but will be about even at the end of the game. The really good Poker-player can usually be told at a glance. The only way to tell whether he is winning or losing is to count his chips; his manner will not show it. His face is almost devoid of expression, so as not to suggest whether he has a good or a poor hand. His mind is concentrated on the game—he watches and takes stock of all the other players, notes their play, and before very long will arrive at a pretty correct estimate of what each of his opponents is likely to do under certain given circumstances. He never gets really excited, though he may feign to be, for the purpose of deceiving one of the other players, usually a somewhat inexperienced one.

It cannot be claimed for Draw Poker that it develops any good moral qualities that a man may have. If a man be straightforward and open, he must not practice either of these virtues, or he will be at a serious disadvantage, and will fall an easy prey to the man who either does not possess these good quali-

ties, or, possessing them, can lay them aside and practice deceit. Without doubt the art of deceiving one's neighbor is the art the most to be cultivated. No great lover of mankind ever made a good Poker-player yet.

The game of Draw Poker has often been called the national game of the United States, and no game has a better claim to the title. There is not a hamlet between the Atlantic and the Pacific where the invitation to "come and have a little game" would not be instantly understood as an invitation to a game of Draw Poker. It is played by all classes, from the millionaire to the darkey who shines your boots in the street. Of course, like all games in which money is used, it is in evil repute in some quarters. The ladies of America are its sworn enemies; for the idea (which seems to be prevalent in England) that American ladies are players of the game is a fallacious one. The great evil in Poker is the tendency to increase the stakes. There are several sets where the game has at first been played for stakes which all could afford, but where those stakes have gradually been increased at the request of the losers, until, instead of playing for the pleasure of the game, everyone played to win money from the others. Now, as soon as a man plays for stakes he cannot afford, he is not playing the game in the spirit in which it should be played. Money should merely be looked upon as a controlling power to keep the play within bounds. Of course, it is impossible to lay down any exact law as to the stakes, but the limit (i. e., the maximum amount of any single "bet" or "Raise") should be fixed at such a sum that the loss of fifty times the amount of it at one sitting would inconvenience no one. Now, as most people are usually more or less cognizant of the pecuniary means of those with whom they play, it should not be very difficult to fix a limit before commencing which would suit all parties.

The game is sometimes played without a limit, and consequently the stakes are very high. The practice of playing an unlimited game or a game for high stakes cannot be too severely condemned. To play an unlimited game is pure gambling, and places a player of small means almost at the mercy of a rich one. An amount which is a trifling sum to one man is more than another can afford to or should lose. Poker is not a gambling game—it is a scientific game in which money is used—and as soon as the idea of dollars and cents enters into a man's game, it fetters his skill and destroys his science. In the game of Poker there are a great many opportunities for the practice of fraud. Of course, by the aid of sleight-of-hand, fraud can be introduced into almost any game; but, in spite of the carefulness with which the laws for its governance have been framed, the possibilities for cheating at Poker without manipulating the cards are many. Now, playing for high stakes is a direct encouragement to fraud. In clubs or in other more or less public places where

the game is played, it is almost impossible to keep out that class of gentlemen who somehow always seem to win. They are always ready for a game, and the higher the stakes, the more anxious they are to play. As they are always running the risk of discovery, they must play for high stakes, to make it worth their while. The only way, therefore, to get rid of them is to play for nominal or small stakes. People are beginning to recognize this fact in this country, and the true lovers of the game almost invariably play for low stakes. As an instance of this, a party of gentlemen in Cleveland, composed of some of the richest men of that city, used to meet regularly for the purpose of playing Poker. They began to play for reasonable stakes—stakes which every gentleman can well afford—but these stakes were gradually increased, until the game played was an unlimited one. This lasted for some time, until they became aware that they were all playing to win each other's money, and not in the proper spirit of the game. So they made a change. They met as usual, but ten cents is their limit, and if one of them loses two dollars, he feels that he has had a very bad night indeed. They are just as keen to win, but there is an entire absence of the unnatural excitement produced by large sums of money changing hands.

Poker is one of the most fascinating of games, and it will, therefore, be found advisable to fix a time at which the game should stop. To a person who has never played Poker this may sound absurd, but when the game has been played a few times, the necessity of such a regulation will be recognized. I have known a game last over forty-eight hours, the players taking it in turns to snatch a few hours' sleep rather than break up the game. When a time is not fixed, nobody likes to suggest stopping; it sounds mean for a winner to propose it, and the losers almost always wish to continue, in the hope of retrieving their losses. On board the Atlantic steamers the game is stopped at twelve, by the turning out of the lights, but in a private card-room such summary means can, unfortunately, not be adopted. A time to stop should, therefore, be fixed, and abided by. When the players are men who have business or some other occupation during the day, the game should not be prolonged after twelve o'clock, but should stop promptly at that hour, heedless of requests for "one more round."

THE LAWS OF POKER

DEALING

- 1.—One card is thrown, face up, to each player. The lowest card deals. The ace is the lowest; the king is the highest.
- 2.—Cards are shuffled in sight. Every player has a right to shuffle. The dealer shuffles last.
- 3.—The player to the right of the dealer cuts.
- 4.—One card at a time is given to each player, beginning at the left.
- 5.—The deal goes to the left.
- 6.—A pack with a faced card, when dealt, requires a new deal by the same dealer. Cards are reshuffled and cut as before.

7.—When a card is faced in dealing, this turning of the card being due to the dealer, or any other player, whether by accident or not, the player must receive the card.

8.—If two cards are exposed in the same way as described in Rule 7, there must be a new deal.

9.—If the dealer gives a player six cards, or four cards, or more or less than five, a new deal is in order. It is a misdeal. If all the players receive four or six cards each it is a misdeal.

10.—No play can be made without the exact number of cards, which is five.

DISCARDING

11.—After the first five cards are dealt, players who remain in may discard up to five cards, and ask for as many new cards as they require. The discard begins at the Age—the player at the left of the dealer. Every player must discard in his regular turn. The exact number of cards asked for is given. Once cards are thrown away, they cannot be handed until the next deal.

12.—Players cannot ask others what is the discard as to numbers, either before or after the draw. (Formerly the rule read that before the draw the question could be asked, but not after it.) The dealer must announce his own discard.

13.—When more cards are offered by the dealer than are asked for by the discard, the player, on announcing that too many, or not enough, cards are dealt him, can decline taking them, and the dealer shall correct the error. If, however, the player accepts the cards from the dealer, and looks at them, whether they be more or less than the regular number he should have, which is five, the player is ruled out of the game.

14.—If, in asking for cards in the draw, one card is turned or shown, the last-accepted rule is that this card cannot be taken. The dealer takes the exposed card, puts it at the bottom of the pack, proceeds to give the cards in order to the next players, and when through, then gives a card to the player whose card has been turned. If more than one card be turned in the draw, the rule is the same. (This rule, though often disputed, should be accepted.)

THE ANTE

15.—The player after the dealer must Ante first before the draw. He puts up any number of chips, not exceeding half the limit. To Come In, he has to double the Ante, as the other players have to. The Ante can never be more, when first put up, than half the limit.

16.—When the cards are dealt, players who Come In must double the Ante.

17.—The Age (i. e., the player to the left of the dealer Comes In last, and makes his Ante good, or not, at his option.

RAISES

18.—After the Age, any player, in his turn, may Raise. Any number of Raises in turn are in order (see explanation below).

19.—After the draw, any player who is in, commencing with the one to the left of the Age, can Raise (see explanation).

20.—The eldest hand—the Age—comes in last. If the Age declines making his Blind good, notwithstanding this, the first player after him must bet first. The Age never passes; (see explanation).

21.—If a bet be Raised by a player who is in his regular turn, the next player must See the bet or retire (see explanation).

(EXPLANATIONS: The above laws on Raising are not at all clear, so, for the sake of thoroughly elucidating them, I propose to show when and how Raises can be made from the commencement of a hand to the end. The first play in the nature of a Raise which can be made is the Straddle, but as this is dealt with later, let us pass on to the next. After the Ante has been made, and the cards dealt, each player as he Comes In (see Law 15) may, in addition to double the amount of the Ante, which he must put up, Raise the pot what amount he chooses, thus making it cost those who have to declare after him just so much more to play; but this can only be done by each player when it is his turn to Come In. The Raise must not exceed the amount of the limit. After the draw, each player may Raise in the same way when it is his turn to bet. Either before or after the draw, the fact that a Raise has already been made does not deprive any other player of the privilege of Raising again; but no individual Raise may be for more than the limit.

The meaning of "The Age never passes" is that no matter what occurs in the way of Straddles, or Raises, the player to the left of the dealer always has to bet last: if he Goes Out, the bets must be made in the same order as if he were in—I. e., the first player who is in to his left must make the first bet, or pass out.)

SHOWING HANDS

22.—A show of hands—putting them on the table, face up—is a rule never to be departed from when the Call is made.

CALLING

23.—When a player bets more than any one else, within the limit, and no one Calls or Sees him, he wins.

ONCE OUT

24.—Once out of a game, a player can never enter again. No foul hand can win under any circumstances (see the explanation of a "Foul Hand," Chapter IV.).

THE BLIND AND STRADDLE

25.—The Age alone can make the Blind. The next to the Age can Straddle. But the third player after the Age cannot begin the Straddle. The third player can Straddle the Straddler, always within the limit.

(Explanation: The Straddle must be for double the amount of the Ante, and must be put up before the player looks at his hand. Thus, if the Age Antes 1 (which makes it 2 to play), the player to his left may Straddle by putting up 2, and making it 4 to play; and so on. The Straddles may continue until it costs the limit to play, but must then stop.)

26.—The Straddler cannot make the Straddle and Raise at the same time. (Note: There is no rule less observed than the one that the Age never passes. This Rule, No. 20, should be faithfully observed.)

RULES FOR THE JACK POT

27.—Each player puts up as many chips as the one having the Age.

28.—The opening hand must have a Pair of jacks or better.

29.—If no player Come In, another chip

is added by each player, and a second round begins.

30.—After the opener to the left of him all the players can Come In, providing they See the amount he bets.

31.—The opening bet must be put up before the draw.

32.—The opener makes the first bet. (Note: This law holds good even if the opening bet be Raised before the draw.)

33.—The last person to bet is the player who is to the right of the opener.

34.—All Raises, as in Poker, are in regular order.

35.—For an error in opening a Jack Pot, the person having made the mistake retires from the game. The penalty for the mistake is for him to put up a Jack Pot equal in chips to the one he has entered into in error.

36.—In the case of an error of this kind, any other player, to the left of the putative opener, having a Pair of jacks or better, can open.

37.—If the error is found out after the cards have been drawn, and no hand has a Pair of openers, that round of Jack Pots is null and void.

38.—A Jack Pot cannot be opened by a player drawing for a Straight or Flush. Any other player but the opener can draw for what he pleases. (Note: See the explanation of this apparently arbitrary rule in Chapter XI.)

There is one law which Hoyle has omitted, and that is: At the conclusion of a Jack Pot, the opener must, whether he is Called or not, show the cards—I. e., a Pair of jacks or better—with which he opened the Pot. It is not necessary for him to show his whole hand unless Called, but he must show what he opened it on as a proof that he had a right to do so.

VALUE OF THE HANDS AT POKER

The following hands rank in the order in which they are named, beginning with "No Pair" as the lowest hand, up to the "Straight Flush," which is the highest possible hand.

NO PAIR.—This is the lowest hand. There must not be two cards of the same denomination, nor a Straight, nor a Flush. Thus, the king of diamonds, ten of spades, nine of clubs, and the five and the three of hearts. Its value is determined by the highest card irrespective of suit. Thus, a hand with an ace for its highest card will beat a hand with a queen for its highest. Such hands are seldom pitted against each other, except when a Straight or a Flush has been drawn for and not obtained, and the players are "bluffing" as if they had succeeded in the draw.

ONE PAIR.—A hand with a Pair—two cards of the same denomination—in it, and three other odd cards, as the five of spades and the five of hearts, with three useless or odd cards. The value of the cards being the same as in whist, a Pair of aces beat a Pair of kings, or a Pair of tens a Pair of eights, and so on down. If both hold a similar Pair, the hand with the highest odd card wins, or,

if these cards also be alike, the next highest, and so on; if the hands are equal throughout, they divide the pot.

TWO PAIRS.—A hand with Two Pairs and one odd card. The value of this hand is determined by the higher pair. Thus, a Pair of kings and a Pair of threes beat a Pair of Queens and a Pair of tens. In the case of two hands with similar Pairs, the one with the higher odd card wins.

THREES, or THREE OF A KIND.—Three cards of the same denomination, as Three queens or Three tens. The highest Three wins.

STRAIGHT.—When the five cards form a perfect sequence, without regard to suit, thus: A three, four, five, six, and seven, of any color or suit, make a Straight. The ace can count in this hand, either in its usual place as the highest card, or as a one—that is, the lowest card—as ace, king, queen, jack, and ten, or, five, four, three, two, and ace. The value of a Straight is determined by the top card. The first of the latter pair of Straights named above is, therefore, the highest possible; the second is the lowest. If two Straights of the same value are held, the pot is divided. Straights are not always played, but they are quite legitimate, and should be allowed.

FLUSH.—Five cards of the same suit, as five clubs or five hearts, of any denomination. The Flush containing the highest card wins. Thus, the two, four, five, six and ace of the same suit, will beat the king, queen, ten, eight, and seven of the same suit. If the highest card in each hand is alike, the value is determined by the next highest; and so on. Two equal Flushes divide the pot.

FULL HAND.—A hand composed of Three of a Kind, with a Pair of another denomination, as Three kings and a Pair of eights. The hand which contains the highest Three of a Kind wins, irrespective of the other Pair. Three fives and a Pair of twos are better than Three fours and a Pair of aces.

FOURS, OR FOUR OF A KIND.—A hand in which four of the five cards are of the same denomination—thus, Four fives or Four nines. The highest Four wins.

STRAIGHT FLUSH.—The highest hand that can be held. It is a Straight in which all the cards are of the same suit. The value is determined in the same way as with a Straight—the highest top card winning. It is possible for two Straight Flushes to be equal, and in that case the pot is divided; but the hand is so exceedingly rare that two similar ones in the same round have, perhaps, never been seen.

A few extra hands have also drifted into the game, but are seldom played. For instance:

SKIPS are a species of Straight, but the cards must not run consecutively, but the interval of one between each, thus: Two, four, six, eight, and ten, or five, seven, nine, jack, king. This hand, when played, beats Two Pairs.

ROUND THE CORNER STRAIGHTS are played in some of the Southern States. Examples of these are king, ace, two, three, and four, or jack, queen, king, ace and two. When played, the hand ranks as a Straight but any Straight will beat it.

TIGER.—This hand is, fortunately, very seldom played. It consists of the lowest

possible combination of five cards; these are two, three, four, five, and seven. Its place is between a Straight and a Flush.

TECHNICAL TERMS USED IN POKER

So many technical terms peculiar to Poker are in use among players that it is difficult to write about the game without using some of them, so I give an explanatory list of them below:

AGE.—The player to the left of the dealer.

ANTE.—The stake put up by the Age at the commencement of every hand. Double the amount of this stake must be put up by all wishing to play.

BLAZE.—A hand composed entirely of picture cards. It is rarely played, but when retained it beats Two Pairs. It should be ruled out.

BLIND.—The same as Age.

BLUFF.—When a player, having a weak hand, makes a big bet, in the hope of driving the others out, he is said to Bluff. (This word, although not exclusively a technical Poker one, is used so frequently in the game that the explanation of it was deemed necessary.)

CALL.—This term is applied to the bet made by the person whose turn it is to bet last, when he deposits the full amount staked by the better or Raiser, and no more. This person is said to Call, and all hands must be shown.

CHIP IN.—This means to bet counters, but is usually said of a person who only bets one. He is said to Chip rather than to bet.

TO DISCARD.—To throw out from your original hand cards which you desire to replace by others.

TO DRAW.—To take new cards to the amount of your discards.

ELDEST HAND.—The same as the Age.

TO FILL YOUR HAND.—To improve it by the draw. This term is more frequently applied to making Flushes and Straights, or Full Hands.

FOUL HAND.—A hand composed of more or less than five cards. Such a hand must be immediately ruled out.

GOING BETTER.—When one player sees the bet of another, and makes a further bet.

GOING IN.—Anyone entering the game by putting up double the amount of the Ante or the Straddle is said to Go In.

GOING OUT.—Anyone who, either before or after the draw, throws away his hand, and thus abandons his interest in the pot, is said to Go Out.

THE JOKER.—The Joker is a card used in the game of euchre, and will be found in all cards of American manufacture. It is sometimes introduced into the game of Poker, making a pack of fifty-three cards. The Joker in a player's hand may stand for any card he choose. Thus, one Pair may by its presence be increased to Three of a Kind, or Two Pairs to a Full Hand; four cards of a

suit and the Joker make a Flush, and a four Straight is completed with it. With such a diabolical innovation as this, even a slight diminution in the value of this card is very welcome, such as its only being allowed to increase the lower Pair in the case of Two Pairs, or, in the case of equal Straights or Flushes, the hand with the Joker being considered the lower. It can, of course, only be played this way by previous arrangement.

LIMIT.—This is a certain number of chips which it is agreed before commencing the game shall be the amount of any single bet or Raise. This amount can be bet over and over again.

MAKING GOOD.—Putting up by the Age an amount equivalent to his original Ante, thereby entitling him to play.

PASS.—To retire from the game by declining to See a bet or Raise already made.

PAT HAND.—A hand complete without drawing, as a Flush, a Straight, or a Full Hand.

THE POT.—All the chips already bet, either as a Blind or otherwise.

TO SEE.—Equivalent to Calling, except that, as it can be done by any person after a bet is made it is not final.

SAY.—When it is the turn of any player to bet it is said to be his Say.

TO STRADDLE.—To double the Ante.

Innumerable other terms have been introduced into the game, such as "Two Pairs, Aces up," or "Two Pairs, Queens up," which signifies that Two Pairs are held with aces and queens, respectively, for the higher pair. A "Full, Queens up" means that Three queens and another Pair are held; an "Ace Flush," a Flush with an ace as the highest card. To retain a high card with a small Pair when drawing is called "holding up a kicker." There are many other words and expressions used in Poker, but the above are the most common.

THE GAME

The game is played with a full pack of fifty-two cards, and it is well to use a pack containing a blank card. Such a card is usually to be found in cards of American manufacture, and should be always kept at the bottom of the pack, to prevent a careless dealer from exposing the bottom card, the sight of which might guide any one of the players in the draw. The number of players should be limited to six; five is the best number, but six is better than four or seven. If there be only four players, the game is apt to become rather uninteresting, because, of that number, usually only two, or at the most three, are left in to contest the pot. With six playing, the game often becomes a little slow, on account of the time consumed in "Coming In" and drawing cards. More than six players should not be allowed, for, if seven play, thirty-five cards are used to form the original hands, thus leaving only seventeen for the draw. Now, if all the players, or even five of the players, come in and draw cards, this number would usually be inadequate to supply their wants, and recourse would have to be had to the discards.

This causes delay, gives an opportunity for fraud, and, above all, gives the players who are drawing to small pairs an advantage over those who hold larger ones, because small cards are more apt to be discarded than large ones. The best number is, therefore, five. "Chips" (i. e., counters) are generally used instead of money for the sake of convenience, the host generally constituting himself banker, and selling so many to each of the players. These chips can, of course, represent any amount which shall be mutually decided upon, and must be redeemed by the banker at the end of the game.

For the better demonstration of the way the game is played, let us assume that five persons, A, B, C, D, and E, sit down to play. They agree that the limit shall be twelve chips—that is to say, that no player can at any one time bet or Raise more than that amount, although, if anyone bet the limit, one of the other players may Raise any amount up to the limit over him, and that player can in turn be Raised, and so on.

A card is dealt, face up, to each player, and A, receiving the lowest, must deal. B should shuffle, and E cut. Before the deal commences, B must put up an Ante, and it is the duty of the dealer to see that this is done. He Antes one chip. Five cards are dealt to each player:

- A gets ace high and four hearts
- B " a pair of queens.
- C " " deuces.
- D " tens and fours.
- E " ace high.

C has to declare first whether he plays or not. Having a Pair so much below the average, he decides not to play. He signifies that such is his intention by saying, "I pass," and throwing up his hand. It is then D's turn. He, having Two Pairs, of course plays, and has to put in two chips, or double the amount of the Ante. It is not necessary for him to declare that he plays, the mere placing of the chips in the pot being sufficient. He retains his cards. E, having No Pair in his hand, should, like C, pass out. A's hand is at present worthless; but he has a chance of making a Flush by discarding his spade and drawing a heart. He goes in, and must also put two chips in the pot. B also stays in, but has only to place one chip in the pot to make his Ante good, i. e., to equal the amount put in by the other players.

The pot is now made up for which B, D, and E are to play, and the drawing commences—that is to say, each player who has come in has the privilege of endeavoring to improve his hand by exchanging the whole, or any number of his cards for fresh ones. The dealer holds what remains of the pack in his hand (the hands discarded by C and E not being included), and asks each player in turn, commencing with B, how many cards he requires. B retains his Pair of queens, throws away the other three cards, and asks for three in exchange. He may improve his hand by the addition of another Pair, when he will have Two Pairs, or may draw another queen, when he will have Three of a kind; or he may even make a Full Hand or Four queens. A deals him three cards, face downwards, off the top of the pack. D calls for one card, wanting either a four or a ten to make a Full Hand. A requires one card to complete his Flush, and must, on dealing it to himself, announce distinctly how many he takes.

B and D failed to improve their hands, but A succeeded in making a Flush. The hands are now complete, and the betting commences. It would be C's place to bet first, he being to the left of the Age; but, as he is out, the first player to his left who is still in must make the first bet. It thus devolves upon D, who must either make a bet or pass. If he pass, he must throw away his hand, and thus abandon all chance of winning the pot, leaving A to bet first. As he has Two Pairs, he will, of course, make a bet—say two chips. It is then A's turn. He can either pass out. See D's bet by depositing two chips in the pot, or he can Raise over him. Having a good hand, he Raises the limit—that is, he puts two chips in the pot to equal D's bet, and supplements it with twelve as a Raise, making fourteen in all. Then B must either bet the whole fourteen chips or pass out. His hand is not good enough to bet so much, so he passes. D should Call by putting up the additional twelve chips deposited by A, and the hands, being Called, are shown, and A, having the better one, takes the pot. When the hands are called, all the players left in should immediately lay them face upwards on the table, as everybody has a right to see them. Some players have a very bad habit of miscalling their hands when Called; of course, this is usually only done in joke, but it is not right, because it often induces inexperienced players to throw their hands away, thinking they are beaten, and when a hand is once discarded it cannot be reclaimed. Never, therefore, discard your hand until you see one that is better than yours.

Let us take another round in which the original hands were the same, E Going Out as before, but in which C Comes In.

C has improved his hand by the addition of a Pair of queens; B has not increased his hand, A has failed to make his Flush, and D's hand is also unchanged. Being C's first bet, he bets a chip. D Sees (i. e., equals) his bet by also betting a chip. A and B. Go Out. On showing the hands, C and D both have Two Pairs, but C's highest pair (queens), being higher than D's (tens), he takes the pot.

This round is an example of the great difference in the final result of a draw by another player Coming In.

POSITIONS IN RELATION TO PLAY

The way the cards are dealt, and the original hands formed, the way those hands are afterwards improved and then bet upon, should now be clear. But as, in the next round after the one demonstrated in the preceding chapter, it will be B's turn to deal, and C will have to Ante, all the players will be in a different position, and their play should vary in consequence.

We will assume that the same party of five are playing, that they occupy the same positions at the table, and will point out what the player in each position should do under certain given circumstances.

THE DEALER must insist on the cards being cut, and must see that the Age puts up an Ante. He should not look at his cards until

it is his turn to declare whether he plays or not, although he has a right to look at them as soon as they are received; by doing this he will be able to observe the demeanor and actions of the other players, and, without the distraction of looking at his own hand, will be able to note the manner of those who Come In, and will also deprive the others of drawing any conclusion from the expression of his own face on seeing his hand. If the three players who have to declare before he does all Come In without Raising, he may presume that he is playing against no less than two average hands and one above the average, the latter probably belonging to C, who, being the first to declare, would not Come In unless he had above the average. If he has a fair hand, say a Pair between nines and aces, he should merely Come In. If he has Two Pairs, or better, he should certainly Raise, for he holds, presumably, the best hand. Now, if any of the players before A Raise, it would probably mean either a "bluff," or that the player held a Pat hand—i. e., a hand which is complete without drawing, which he must make all he can of before the draw exposes its strength. A would have to exercise his judgement as to which of the above two possibilities is the more likely. In the former he would, of course, Come In on an average Pair; in the latter it would be idle for him to play, having no money invested, unless he held a very strong hand.

THE AGE.—This is the finest position at the table if properly played. Hoyle says: "The dangers of the Age cannot be too much expatiated upon: it is the finest and worst position at the same time." But if players in this position would only appreciate the folly of throwing good money after bad, there would hardly be a single drawback to the position. The great advantage is that the Age has the privilege of declaring last. He should look upon the Ante which he has put up as already gone, or as a price paid for the position he occupies, and then let him play his game without regard to it.

The remarks on the position of the dealer are applicable in a greater degree to the Age. He has the opportunity of observing everyone's actions before deciding whether he will Come In. If, say, three of the other four players Come In without a Raise, it would be policy to Come In on a small Pair, not on account of the money already invested, but in view of the great advantage of Coming In and betting last. And here let me correct a popular error which, although prohibited by the laws of the game, is very often committed. It is not possible to take the Age away from the man to the left of the dealer. If the Ante be Straddled, it merely gives the Straddler the advantage of Making Good, i. e., Coming In last; he still has to bet first. If the Age hold a Pair of kings, or better, he should Raise the pot; then, if he improve his hand by the draw, he has an excellent opportunity of Raising again, and if he does not improve, the other players will probably only bet a chip each, waiting for him to Raise; he can, therefore, Call cheaply. In the event of his not improving his hand, it would not be well for him to attempt to bluff, because, for some reason, nobody ever gives the Age credit for holding a good hand; he would thus certainly be called. The Age should rarely attempt to mask his hand, if he has not Raised before the draw, for if he have a Pair it would be no use his holding

up an odd card and drawing two—that would lessen his chance of improving his Pair, and would deceive nobody into the belief that he had Threes, because the others would argue that if he really had Three of a Kind he would certainly have raised. Or, if he have Two Pairs and stands Pat, nobody would believe that he had a genuine Pat hand for the same reason. There is another thing that the Age should always consider, and that is, inexplicable as it may seem, the other players always seem to conspire to drive him out. It seems to be a natural instinct based originally, no doubt, on a desire to drive out the man who holds the best position, and to obtain the chip which he has been forced to put up "blind," without letting him endeavor to reclaim it. This is not altogether disadvantageous to the Age, because it often encourages the others to over-bet their hands.

The player to the left of the Age holds the worst position at the table. He can obtain a momentary advantage by Straddling the Blind (i. e., doubling the Ante before the cards are dealt), and thus having the privilege of Coming In last; but few good players ever Straddle, considering that it is bad enough to have to bet blind when you hold the Age, without doing so voluntarily. He should not Come In unless he holds a hand above the average. Some players will not Come In on less than a Pair of queens; but this, I think, is going a little too far, though I would not advise Coming In on less than a Pair of tens. He has no chance of observing others—he has to Come In first and bet first; then, if he have a good hand, he has no chance of playing it, for he dare not bet the limit at first. His only course then is to be patient, and to wait, for if there be another good hand at the table the pot will be Raised, and he will get the chance of Raising back; if there be not, his first bet of a chip will be Called, and he will win a small pot. A man in this position should remember that the hand being played is not the last of the evening, and that everything does not depend on his winning this time. A great many players lose by over-anxiety; they want to win every time; they forget that the game will go on, and that after the present hand will be another, and after that many more.

Of the other two hands, D and E, nothing much can be said, although, of course, the one nearer to the dealer's right has the advantage. Neither is in a good position to Raise either before or after the draw, but E will often do so, having in view the fact that the dealer will almost always play, and that the Age, in spite of all admonitions, will usually run after his wretched little Ante, and so reduce his pile. A Raise from either D or E should always be regarded with extreme caution, as a bluff is seldom made from either of these positions.

From the above remarks it will be seen that the same hands, held at different places at the table, require to be played in a different manner. It does not do, of course, to abide by these rules too closely, or the other players will soon be able to approximately estimate the value of your hand. At all stages of the game your play should be as varied as possible, and then your methods should also be altered by your knowledge of the characteristics of the other players. Often the value of a position is increased, or lessened by the position of one of the other players. It is bad, for instance, to sit to the right

of a very liberal or very lucky player, because, it being your turn to Come In before him, you put up the amount, not knowing what he will do, and then, if he Raise you may be in the position of having a good enough hand to go in for the original sum, but not for the amount of his Raise in addition; the value of your position is thus lessened. On the other hand, if he sit on your right, he will have to declare before you, and you will then have the opportunity of deciding whether your hand be good enough to risk the amount of his Raise.

Several writers have given their idea of the comparative values of the different positions, but of course they are only ideas, and cannot be proved mathematically. The following appears to me to be as correct an estimate of those values as it is possible to determine:

	C	D	
B (Age)	10	12	E
19			13
	A (Dealer)		
	16		

The above is based on the supposition that all the players are possessed of equal science.

GOOD PLAY

LET us now take another round, which on account of the hands held, is liable to result in play a little more complicated than that which occurred in the previous one demonstrated. The application of the rules to govern the play from each position at the table can then be noted.

- B Antes one, and the cards are dealt by A.
- A gets four diamonds and a pair of sevens.
- B " nines and fives.
- C " pair of eights.
- D " three threes.
- E " ace high.

Now if C, whose place it is to first declare whether he plays or not, be a conservative player, he will Go Out, as he will almost certainly have to better his hand in the draw to win the pot. We will, however, presume that he plays, and note the result of his indiscretion. D Comes In, and has a good enough hand to Raise the pot before the draw were he in another position, but if he Raise he would probably drive out E, A, and B, who have to declare whether they will play after he does; it is, therefore, unwise of him to do so, so he merely comes In. E has nothing to draw to, and so Goes Out. A Comes In, but has yet to decide whether to draw for a Flush or to his Pair. In deciding this he should be governed by what the others draw. In ordinary cases it is well to draw for a Flush, if by doing so you do not have to throw away one of a higher Pair than a pair of tens. The same remark applies to drawing for a straight with both ends open—that is to say, a Straight which can be filled by drawing a card to complete it at either end. E has already put in one chip, and it, therefore, only costs him one more to play. He will, of course, play, but he should do more. With four playing, the chances are that before the draw his hand is the best at the table. He should, then, make the most

of it while it is, presumably, the best. He Raises the pot the limit. By doing this he drives out players who have Come In on small Pairs, and who might get Threes and beat him. C is in this position, and retires from the pot he should never have entered. D stays in, and might Raise back, but it would be better for him to keep the strength of his hand dark. E is already out. A must consider the chances, which are 9 in 47 of his filling his Flush (drawing to his Pair being put out of the question by the Raise), or a little over 4 to 1, whereas the money odds, as represented by the thirty-two chips in the pot against the twelve he must put up if he stays in, are only a little over 2½ to 1. He should, therefore, stay out. B's plan has worked well so far, as he has driven out two players, either of whom, by improving his hand in the draw, would have beaten him, provided he did not better his. B calls for one card, and D, not wishing to expose the strength of his hand by taking two, also takes one. Neither of them improve their hands. D has to bet first, and bets one, as it is his play to wait and see what B, who Raised before the draw, will do; but B has done his betting before the draw, and so merely Calls. A show of hands results in D's taking the pot.

The above might be varied as follows: Suppose that C Goes Out, D Comes In as before, and that A also decides to Go Out. In this case, there only being left one man in for B to fight, it would not be such good play for him to Raise, because B must either have a better or a worse hand than B. If his hand be worse, he (D) would not think it worth Seeing a Raise on the chances of winning such a small pot; and if his hand be better, then B would be Raising a man with a better hand than his, which would be suicidal policy. So it would be better for B to simply fill his Ante and Call any bet made by D.

Now, suppose that they all came in except E, and that no one Raised the pot before the draw, and that the hands formed by the draw were as follows:

A a Flush.
B nines and fives.
C four eights.
D three threes.

It will be seen that D drew one card for the purpose of masking his hand, and that A, in view of the fact that two of his opponents drew one card apiece, anticipated that strong hands were out against him, and so divided his Pair, and drew for the Flush.

We now have three very good hands and one average one against each other. How is the betting to be done? C holds a hand which, although by no means invincible, is almost certain to be the best at the table; but he is in a very unfortunate position—that of having to bet first. If he bet the limit, as his hand would justify him in doing, he would almost surely frighten the others out, in nine cases out of ten; and his play now is, of course, to keep them in and induce them to bet. He should, therefore, make a small bet, say two, in the most off-hand manner he can assume—his only chance of making anything being to give the impression that his hand is a weak or an average one, so that, perhaps, one of the other players may Raise him and give him a chance of Raising back. In fact, he must “lie low in the high grass,” and wait. In this case the ruse answers well. D, with Three threes, Raises; and A, having

made a Flush, Raises again. B sees that he has no chance with Two little Pairs, and Goes Out. Then C can reap the reward of his patience, by Raising again. D should Go Out, and A either Raise again, or Call. If the former, which he would be quite justified in doing, playing against a man who drew three cards, C would, of course, Raise him back again, when A should Call, and both hands being laid face up on the table, C wins the pot.

CHANCE LAWS AND PROBABILITIES

A GREAT many learned and abstruse papers have been written on Poker probabilities and chance laws, the articles on this subject by the late Mr. Richard Proctor being, perhaps, the best known. Of course, it is very interesting to read how many possible combinations of five cards can be made, how this can be figured out and proved to be correct, and also the mode of arriving at the actual number of possible Pairs, Two Pairs, Threes, &c.; but to the practical Poker-player all such calculations can be of little use, for if his memory were capable of containing all such statistics, his mind would be so full of them that his play would be reduced to mere machinery. That which is far more important is the study of the draw, and the demonstration of the odds against his improving any given hand. But a complete knowledge of these chances will only carry him a certain length. It will enable him to estimate the actual value of his hand, but it will be impossible by this or any other means to estimate the value of his hand in comparison with the hands held by the other players.

The probabilities of being dealt a particular Poker-hand in the first five cards, are:

Straight Flush	Once in 65,000 deals.
Fours	4,164 "
Full Hand	693 "
Flush	507 "
Straight	254 "
Threes	45 "
Two Pairs	12 "
One Pair	Ten times in 13 "

The chances of obtaining any of the above hands by judicious drawing are, of course, considerably better. Here the question of skill comes in, and destroys all calculations; but assuming that a certain draw is made to a certain hand, the chances can be readily determined.

If one Pair be held, and the three other cards discarded, the chances against making Two Pairs are 8 to 1; against making Threes, 8 to 1; against making a Full Hand 6¼ to 1; against drawing a similar pair, and thus making Fours, 364 to 1. But assuming that an odd card be retained, the chances are then 8 to 1 against drawing a similar card to the odd one, and thus making Two Pairs, and 12 to 1 against drawing a similar card to the Pair, and making Threes. The chances of improvement are diminished by making the latter draw, but the impression made by a two-card draw is always a good one. Two cards should not be drawn to a Pair, unless an ace or a king can be retained with them, except for the purpose of a “bluff.” If most

of the other players are in, the chances of drawing an ace or a king are not quite so good as those of drawing a small card, because the other players are more likely to be staying in on high than on low cards. The probabilities of such being the case are, of course, quite impossible to determine, but they are very slight indeed, and are more than compensated by the chances of increasing the comparative value of the hand by making aces or kings up instead of two small Pairs. Thus the actual mathematical expectation of improvement is greater by drawing three cards, but the comparative value of the hand is greatly enhanced by a successful two-card draw. The odd card should only be retained with a small Pair—i. e., a Pair on the merits of which the pot cannot presumably, be won—say, a Pair of nines, or under.

The only possible way of improving Two Pairs being to make a Full Hand, the chances lie in a nutshell; they are 11% to 1 against its being made. When two small Pairs are held, and there are indications of fairly good hands being out, the smaller Pair is often discarded, the chances of drawing a third to a Pair being better than of making a Full Hand out of Two Pairs. Again, if Two Pairs be held with aces or kings up, and a Raise followed by a two-card draw by one of the other players points to Threes being held by him, the smaller Pair might be discarded, in the hope of making high Threes. No rules can be laid down for either of the above cases, as a question of judgment is involved. A great many players of experience recommend standing Pat occasionally on Two small Pairs. This appears to me to be unwise, as the only hand liable to be driven out is a hand which is just a little better. Almost any player with "Aces Up" or Three of a Kind will call a Pat hand, particularly if the pot be a large one, and to stand Pat on Two Pairs against an inferior hand is to waste your resources. To play a hand Pat, the limit should be Raised both before and after the draw, and the game will seldom be found to be worth the candle. The only hand to stand Pat on, other than a genuine one, is a hand without a pair, and nothing to draw to. In the Southern States, players consider it almost a point of honor to stand Pat on a hand called a "kilter"—i. e., a hand with a nine for the highest, and a two for the lowest card. It is impossible to make anything of such a hand by drawing, and the only thing to be done is either to discard the whole or to play it Pat.

Threes may be increased to a Full Hand or to Four of a Kind by the draw. If two cards be drawn, Four of a Kind should be made once in 23½ times, and a Full Hand twice in 23½ times, or the hand should be improved once in 8 times. It is well to retain an odd card with the Threes, and to draw one card, although the probabilities of improvement are less. When drawing this way Four of a Kind should be made once in about 16 times, or the hand should be improved once in 12 times. The reason for drawing only one card to Three of a Kind is, of course, to mask the hand. A man who takes one card may be drawing for a Straight, a Flush or Two Pairs. The question is whether it be policy to diminish one's chances of improvement for the purpose of masking the hand. My opinion is that it is, for Three of a Kind is a good enough hand to win the pot nineteen

times out of twenty, and the player holding such a hand should devote more attention to making as much by it as he possibly can than to trying to improve it; he should be more afraid of not being Called or bet against than of not bettering his hand. And then, again, if he draw one card, many players will Call him on very small hands, on the supposition that he was drawing for a Straight or a Flush, and did not make it.

The advisability of drawing for Straight or Flushes is greater or less according to the number of players, although the mathematical expectation of improvement is the same, no matter how many play. These two hands differ in character from any other, inasmuch as the four cards drawn to are of no value without the fifth, and therefore, although the probabilities of improvement are not very slight, the hand must be improved to win on its merits, whereas a Pair unimproved by the draw may be the best hand at the table. You therefore obtain either a useless hand or a very good one, which, presumably, is the best at the table. Now, as you cannot win without improving, it is not worth taking the chances of doing so for the sake of winning a small pot, for it costs just as much to play in a small as in a large one; and if the hand be made in a small party, it is probably a much better hand than is needed to win, and you have thus paid for a superfluity. The more players there are, then, the greater the value of a draw for a Flush or a Straight becomes. Drawing to a Straight with both ends open, the odds are about 6 to 1 against its being made; to an "in-between," or one-ended Straight, the chances are about 12 to 1 against the player. When drawing one card to four of the same suit, a Flush should be made 9 times out of 47, or the odds against the player are 4 to 1.

One would think that when a Full Hand is dealt Pat, drawing would be out of the question, and yet players of considerable experience occasionally discard the Pair or one of the Pair and draw one or two cards under certain circumstances. For instance, in a small party, or with few playing, if a Full Hand with aces or kings up be received Pat, and there are no indications of strong hands being out, the risk is often taken of discarding rather than betraying the strength of the hand by playing Pat. This should only be done on occasions when special weakness is betrayed by the other players.

RAISING BEFORE THE DRAW

The privilege, which each player in turn has, of Raising before the draw, is not made use of enough by the majority of average Poker-players. They seem to forget, or to overlook the fact, that hands should be bet upon before as well as after the draw. What player would hesitate about raising on Two Pairs after the draw?—and yet a Pair of aces before is equally good in comparison with the probable hands of the other players, but few Raise on them. Now, if you hold a Pair of aces before the draw, the chances are that you have the best hand; then Raise the pot while it is the best, for if the others have

smaller Pairs, you have the same chance of improving your aces as they have their Pairs, and you will probably draw out at least one of the players, and thus lessen the opposition to you.

It is very much to be regretted that players do not sufficiently realize that the betting should be done at two different periods, and under two different conditions, because they thus lose one of the most attractive features of the game, and one which gives such a good opportunity for the display of science. The game is rendered much more interesting when played like this, for each pot is really played for twice. The Raising is at first being done in the dark; then comes the draw, which partially exposes all the hands, giving each player a hint to go upon, and often changes the whole character of the game. The player who before was looked upon as the one holding the best hand may give place to another, and a hitherto despised hand may loom up as probably the best at the table.

Let us suppose a set of hands to demonstrate this. A is dealer, B holds the Ace, and Antes, while C Straddles the Blind. The cards are dealt.

- A has aces and deuces.
- B " three jacks.
- C " queens and fours.
- D " a pair of kings.
- E " " queens.

It is D's first Say, and he Comes In (no one should be influenced in Coming In by whether there has been a Straddle or not, for it merely means that higher stakes are being played for; the odds against each player are no greater). E also Comes In without a Raise, but A, with aces up, Raises, the merits of his hand warranting it. B's hand is good enough to Raise over A, but the effect of two Raises in succession would probably be to drive the others out; whereas, B's play is to keep them in, so he merely Comes in. C, being last to declare Raises over A. This drives out D and E, but A Raises again; and here B might Raise, as two fairly strong hands are certainly out, but it would be better for him still to play dark, and merely See the Raise. C also Sees. Now that the draw is about to commence, the probable winner of the pot appears to be either A or C, for B, not having Raised at all, is not put down as having much. They draw one card each (B doing so to mask the strength of his hand), and no improvement is made in any of the hands. The Raisers are giving credit for each holding two big Pairs, and B is thought either to hold two small Pairs, or to be drawing to a Straight or a Flush. B's position, it will be seen, is considerably the best, as he has the privilege of betting last instead of first or second. C starts by betting a chip, A Raises, and then B, exposing his strength for the first time, Raises over A. This takes the other two by surprise, for up to now B has been almost overlooked in their calculations; they know that he drew one card, but that may mean almost anything. The result is that his hand is a complete mystery, and C would Go Out, and A Call. Thus, the whole character of the game was changed by the draw, without the hands being improved in the least—C, who was regarded as having an equal chance with A, retiring after betting a chip, and B, who was not at all conspicuous in the early part of the round, eventually winning the pot. Now, if there had been no Raising before the draw, and

each player had Come In and drawn to the full strength of his hand without improving, B would have been immediately singled out as the winner of the pot, and the proceedings would have been comparatively monotonous, as the result would have been a foregone conclusion.

In the above example, the Raises before the draw infused considerably more interest into the game than if the hands had been played without them. Let us now take a case in which a player, by Raising, increases his chance of winning the pot.

- A holds a pair of aces.
- B " sixes and deuces.
- C " a pair of tens.
- E " " nines.

A is dealer, B the Ace. C, E, and A Come In without a Raise, while D passes out. Now, the chances are that before the draw B's hand is the best, but his chances of improvement are slight (being 1 in 11 $\frac{1}{2}$, as has been shown), whereas each of the other players, by improving, will beat him, and each has a much better chance of doing so than he has. The odds are still slightly in favor of B's winning the pot, being 4 to 3 that neither of the others will improve; but if he can drive any of them out, those odds will be increased directly. From the fact of there not having been a Raise before him, B reasons that he cannot be playing against any better hand than a Pair, and he should therefore Raise. The effect of such a Raise in the present case would be to drive out C and E, while A would stay in; but the chances would now be 4 to 1 in favor of B's winning, even if he did not improve his hand. Of course, the danger of running up against a good hand is incurred by Raising before the draw, but several cases like the above are sure to occur in an evening's play; if anything, the average value of the hands has been increased for the sake of the illustration.

LUCK

THE subject of luck is such an important one that it requires a notice by itself. To "push your luck" is good advice often given to Poker-players, but it is almost always taken in the wrong sense; in fact, players thus advised usually push their bad luck and not their good. To Come In on nothing when luck is against you, and trust to chance to improve your hand in the draw, is what is usually understood by it, and a more suicidal way of playing it is difficult to imagine. The correct interpretation of this advice is to be cautious when your luck is bad, and to stay out till you get a hand worth playing on; but as soon as your luck begins to return, and your hands improve, go in and play them for all they are worth, and a little more. On commencing a game, play quietly and steadily for a few rounds, and note carefully if your luck be good, and also if any of the other players seem to be in a vein. If, after a few rounds, you find that your luck is bad, stay out unless you have a good hand—a hand above the average—and avoid betting against those players whom you have singled out as the fortunate ones. Be patient; your time will come, and when it does, push your hand to the uttermost. It will usually be

found that after a period of depression better hands will return to a player gradually. After several rounds have been dealt without a Pair being held, picture cards will begin to come, then Pairs, and so on gradually to Threes. Then is the time to be as venturesome as before you were cautious. Remember that more money is won on moderate hands, and plenty of them, than on a few isolated big ones. To Straddle the Blind is never advisable, unless your luck is very good; to do so at other times is to force your luck, and not to push it. Baron Rothschild's advice to speculators should always be remembered by Poker-players, to whom it is equally applicable: "Cut short your losses; let your profits run on."

JACK POTS

THE Jack Pot, although only introduced in the game of recent years, has become to such an extent an adjunct of Poker, that it is now almost universally accepted and played. For some reasons its introduction is to be regretted, because it runs counter to one of the most glorious principles of Draw Poker, inasmuch as it forces every player to contribute to the pot. One of the chief beauties of the regular game, and the one which more than any other distinguishes it from other games, is that the player has the option of playing or not, as he chooses, while in the Jack Pot he is obliged to put up a certain amount whether he will or not.

A Jack Pot is a hand which is played when all pass. This is the rule, but this branch of the game became so popular that it was soon discovered that Jack Pots did not come often enough legitimately, so a means of increasing their frequency was introduced. The method employed was the circulation of a small article, termed a "buck," among the players. The name "buck" was derived from a knife with a buckhorn handle being originally used. The buck is placed on the table, and taken by the player winning the first pot, and when it comes to that player's turn to deal, a Jack Pot is played instead of an ordinary hand, and the buck must again be deposited in the pot. The winner of the Jack Pot takes the buck with the pot, and makes another Jack Pot on his next deal; and so on. When Jack Pots are played in the proper way—i. e., when all pass—the Age, instead of withdrawing his Ante, leaves it up, and the other players must each deposit the same amount. When it is played with a buck, an amount is mutually decided upon at the beginning of the game, or it is sometimes played that the temporary holder of the buck may make it what amount he choose within the limit. The cards are dealt by the player to the left of the last dealer. The player to the left of the dealer must then declare whether he will open the Pot—i. e., whether he has in his hand a Pair of jacks or better. No one is obliged to open the Pot, even if he have a right to do so. If the first player will not or cannot open it, the player to his left must then declare, and so on round to the dealer, or until someone can and will open it. If all pass round to the dealer, the hands are thrown up, each player again puts up the same amount as before, and the deal passes. Sometimes several rounds are dealt

before the Pot is opened, and by previous arrangement an ascending scale is then occasionally adopted. Thus, if it be not opened on the first round, as much as a Pair of queens is necessary to do so on the second round; a Pair of kings on the third; and aces on the fourth. Having reached aces, the power of opening sometimes remains there, or a descending scale is adopted, a Pair of kings, or better being the necessary hand on the fifth round, and so on back to jacks. It is much better, however, to remain at jacks, for otherwise mistakes are apt to occur, and the ascending scale is liable to expose the hand of the opener.

The player opening the Pot puts up a stake which must be within the limit, and which the others see or pass out at will, those players who declined to open being equally entitled with the others to Come In. When all who desire to Come In have Seen the opener's bet, the draw takes place, and the betting is done as in the regular game, the opener having to make the first bet. When the round has been played, the opener must, whether he be Called or not, show the "jacks, or better," with which he opened the Pot. It is not necessary for him to show his whole hand unless Called.

A point very much in dispute concerning the Jack Pot, and one on which the recognized rules are a little vague, is whether the opener, holding, say, a Pair of jacks, has a right to split them in order to draw for a Straight or a Flush. Some players argue that, having held the Pair of jacks, he has, by so doing, secured the right to open the Pot, and may then make what draw he chooses for the improvement of his hand. They stipulate only that he must not throw his discarded jack away, but must place it on the table directly in front of him, so as to be able to show it at the end of the hand. Now, this is bad play on the part of the opener, unless the circumstances be very exceptional, because it exposes his hand; but he should not be allowed to do it, even if he wish, for the following reasons: In the first place, when this is done, the Pot is not being opened by a Pair of jacks, or better, but by an incomplete Straight or Flush, and the rules state distinctly that such a proceeding is not allowable, for if it were, a Jack Pot might be won by a poorer hand than a Pair of jacks; and, in the second place, it gives the opener the chance of unfairly deceiving the other players without breaking the rules of the game. For instance, a player opening on Two Pairs might, instead of throwing his fifth card away, place it in front of him, giving the impression that he has split his pair of openers to draw for a Straight or a Flush, and of course everyone would Call him, even on a small Pair. Now, as Jack Pots always result in large pots, fraud is naturally directed towards them, and the simplest way of playing them should therefore be adopted. The best authorities agree that the opener must retain his original Pair. Of course, the showing of the Pair of jacks, or better, at the end of the hand is not absolute proof that the opener had them to commence with, but as it is impossible to prove that they were held all the time without showing them before the draw, the next best means must be adopted—i. e., that of retaining them throughout. Then there is a penalty for opening a Jack Pot without a hand of sufficient strength, and here again authorities differ. Some rule that the person

making the mistake should forfeit three times—some say ten times—the amount of the Pot. Such penalties are, I think, too severe, and would recommend the following course, which is advocated by good authorities. Suppose that A makes the mistake, and the others Come in, but that he discovers his mistake when drawing, and declares it before receiving the cards. In this case it is evidently an unintentional blunder, and he should be merely ruled out of the Pot, leaving the other players who have yet to declare to open it if they can. But if he does not announce his inability to open until after the draw, his action savors very much of fraud, for such an error would certainly be discovered when drawing. In this case, each player should withdraw the amount deposited in the Pot, the delinquent should be made to put up the total amount of the Pot, and, the hand being declared null and void, a fresh deal should be made.

The amount originally staked in a Jack Pot being usually so large, very little opportunity for science is afforded, and the play is usually almost reduced to the level of a round dealt face up, as the best hand almost invariably wins the Pot. The size of the Pot is, of course, a great inducement to play on a weak hand, and a great deal of money is lost by doing so. Always open the Pot if you can. Some players decline doing so, particularly when they have to declare first, under two very different circumstances—when they have a Pair of Jacks, or when they have a Pat or a very strong hand. In the first case, they do not consider their hand strong enough to chance the unknown risks ahead; and, in the second, they pass on the chance of its being opened by one of the other players, and so giving them the opportunity of Raising. In neither case would I advise such action, although the first is sometimes excusable when the player is in very bad luck. As to the amount for which the Pot should be opened, this should depend largely on the position occupied by the opener (i. e., how many have "passed" before him as being unable to open); but the general rule, that the weaker the hand, the larger the opening bet should be, is a good one, for if your hand be weak you want as few opponents as possible, while if your hand be a strong one, your tactics should be to coax the others to play. If the Pot be opened by the player on your right, and you hold a Pair of aces, or Two small Pairs, Raise his opening bet, so as to drive the others out if possible, for with such a hand the chances are you can beat the opener.

Advice to players in Jack Pots can be summed up in a few words: Avoid them as much as possible, but when you enter them (except as the opener) do so with great caution, and not on less than a Pair of Jacks.

ADVICE TO POKER-PLAYERS

ADVICE as to how to play and win at Poker is very hard to give, because the temperament and characteristics of one player differ so much from those of another, and that which would be good advice to one man would be bad to another. The actual rules

and methods of playing the game are merely its elements, and can be learned in a very short time; but to play really well a man must have quick perception and other natural gifts, as heretofore pointed out. Poker must be ever varying in its methods, according to the other players; and yet, although the manner of drawing and betting should be changed as much as possible, it is not well to let the character of your game differ very materially from that of your opponents. For instance, never play a liberal, venturesome game when the others are playing a close, careful one, because you will lose more money when your hand is inferior, and win less when it is superior. It is equally bad to play closely when the others are playing liberally, for you will often be driven out of a pot by Raises, when, as a matter of fact, you hold the best hand. The character of your play must be suited to your company, and when playing with strangers it is often advisable to stay out as much as possible for a few rounds at first, until you obtain an insight into the sort of game played; for in some parties two or three Raises will be made on a hand which in others would merely be Called.

To play Poker well a man must bluff occasionally. When ever a decided weakness is betrayed, a bluff should always be made; for if successfully he wins the pot, and if he be Called, and consequently lose, he will usually find that it is money well invested, for he will gain the reputation of bluffing, and his bets, when he really has a good hand, are much more likely to be Called. When we consider the question of bluffing, we come to the sole advantage of an unlimited over a limited game, inasmuch as the scope for bluffing is not so large in the latter as the former, and the chances for the display of skill are fewer in consequence, as very few successful bluffs are made in a small game. It is not always well to bet the limit when bluffing, for a small coaxing bet will often have more effect, particularly with a bogus Pat hand.

As the art of deceiving is one of the most necessary qualifications, try to hide any strong personalities which you may possess. Cable says: "A man who can play delightfully on a guitar, and keep a knife in his boot, would make an excellent Poker-player." Such a man as that, sitting behind a Full Hand, would probably appear to have the weakest hand at the table, until he began to bet.

Try to acquire the habit of keeping quiet, and of talking as little as possible. The game does not require speech, except when cards are asked for, and the tones of the voice will often betray you. When making a bet, it is enough to put the chips on the table; no observation as to the amount is necessary. The rule about asking questions is often disregarded, as it sometimes happens that, through inattention, a player does not know how many cards were taken by one of the others. Now, as every player has certainly told the dealer, in an audible voice, how many cards he requires, it was the duty of the others to listen. The dealer must announce how many cards he takes. This should be insisted upon, and after that no one has a right to ask. Of course, if one player ask another how many cards he took, he may inform him if he pleases, as his doing so cannot harm anyone, except that it places the inattentive players on a par with those who pay attention to the game.

It has been shown that draws to Straights and Flushes are successful once in so many hands, so it is well to decide at the beginning of the game whether you will draw for them or not, and then stick to your decision. If you commence drawing for them, do so on every opportunity; for although, of course, a run of bad luck might lessen your chances of filling them, they should be made once in so many times, and by ceasing to try them, you lessen your chance of equalizing your draw.

Never be afraid of Going Out on a good hand, if, in your judgement, there be a better one at the table. More money is lost by curiosity than any other way. Never believe that you ought to Call a bet on a weak hand because it is your Say last, or for the sake of "showing respect to your hand." The players who are out will always urge you to do this, because they can then see the hand without paying for the privilege; but as all the other players are your natural enemies, you need feel under no obligation to Call for their benefit.

Vary your draw as much as possible. Keep an ace or a court card with a Pair at times, particularly when you have a small Pair. With Three of a Kind it is almost always best to keep an odd card and draw one, as that may mean Two Pairs, Three of a Kind, or that you are trying for a Straight or a Flush. Your hand is thus effectively masked, and will be a mystery. The more mysterious you can be, the better. If everyone always drew three cards to a Pair, and two cards to Three of a Kind, the hands might almost as well be played face up on the table, for very little betting is likely to be made where each man's holding is so transparent.

Always Ante a small amount. By doing so you will not only cause the game to be played more scientifically, but you will find that it is to your own individual advantage to do so. The Ante will almost always be increased as the game proceeds, although there is no reason why it should cost more to enter the last pot of the evening than the first. When a large Ante is made, the pot thus formed is proportionately larger, and when the betting commences players will Come In and Call, not because in their judgement they have a fair chance of winning the pot, but merely for the percentage as represented by the amount of the pot, as against the comparatively small amount of additional expenditure required. Now, play such as this, although perfectly justified by the circumstances, is contrary to the spirit of Poker, for a successful bluff is almost an impossibility in a large pot. In some parties a rule is made limiting the amount of the Ante; but although its merits are undeniable, it is well not to introduce a rule other than those laid down by the regular authorities on the game (see Chapter II.) If players would only see how a large Ante hurts them individually, no such rule would be necessary. Where Jack pots are not played, the putting up of an Ante is the only compulsory outlay in the game; then why make it larger than is absolutely necessary? If the Ace receive a good hand, he is in the best position at the table for Raising, and thereby increasing the pot before the draw; and if his hand be a poor one, he can retire with a small loss. The amount of the Ante which will improve the game generally, and increase the value of the Ace's position, should not exceed one-tenth of the amount of the limit.

A Raise, on the contrary, should never be for a small amount, for if the man whose bet you have Raised hold a better hand than you, it gives him the privilege of Raising you back, whereas, if he Call, and his hand be inferior to yours, the pot is but slightly increased. For instance, a game is being played with a limit of twelve chips; A bets a chip, and C has a fairly good hand—say Two small pairs. Now, if a good hand, such as a Flush, be worth Raising the limit on, Two Pairs are intrinsically only worth a Raise of one or two, but such a Raise should not be made, for if it be made, and A, having a weaker hand merely Calls the addition to the pot is trifling; while if A hold a good hand, it gives him the opportunity of Raising back, which is, of course exactly what he wants, and C is placed in the embarrassing position of not knowing whether to Go Out or to Call.

As it would be foolish for a man to embark upon any enterprise without a knowledge of the chances of success or failure which underlie it, so it would be foolish for him to attempt to play Poker without comprehending the probabilities in the game; and though he may be engrossed in the play, and observant of the temporary good or bad luck of the different players, let him never forget that mathematical calculations prove that, in the long run, equally good hands will come to all. The main elements of success are, to quote Schenck, good luck, good cards, plenty of cheek, and good temper. To these I may be allowed to add plenty of patience.

VARIETIES OF POKER

The following three variations of the game most commonly played are interesting, but as in their main principles they do not differ materially from the ordinary Draw Poker, I include them in one chapter.

STRAIGHT POKER.—Straight Poker was played before Draw Poker, and is the original game. It carries out more thoroughly the true spirit of the game—in other words, it is almost pure bluff. The essential difference between Straight and Draw Poker is that in the former you play with the original cards—there is no draw—so a player has nothing to guide him in his estimate of the hand of any one of his opponents, except the amount of his bet, or the manner of making it. The minor points of difference are that each player puts up a certain amount before the deal and this forms a pot—there is no Ante. The deal passes to the player winning the pot. You can pass and come in again, except when everyone passes; then the player to the left of the dealer deals again.

STUD POKER.—This is an innovation not often to be met with in what is termed "polite society," but if the reader were to penetrate into any of the numerous "darkey" clubs, he would find it in common use there. As the deal is of no value, one position as good as another, an outsider is often employed as dealer for the evening.

Each player puts up a certain amount, to form a pot. The dealer throws round two cards to each player, the first face down, the second face up. The first card is called the "down card" and is seen by the recipient

only. The player with the highest turned-up card has the privilege of making a bet, or he can pass if he choose and Come In again, as at Straight Poker. If he pass, the player next him can bet or pass; and so on round the table. When a bet has been made, and the other players have either Seen or passed out, or when all have passed, another card is dealt round, face up. The same procedure is then gone through again, the player with the highest shown hand having to bet or pass first; and so on till each player has received five cards, four face up and one face down. The betting and Raising are as in regular Poker, the highest hand winning at the Call.

This game is sometimes played with a draw thus: Five cards are dealt to each player, the first face down, and the other four face up. Then cards are drawn which are not exposed. No bets can be made until after the draw, and then only as in regular Poker. No passing and Coming In again.

WHISKEY POKER.—Each player puts up a certain amount, this forms a pot, which is not increased, there being no betting. Five cards are dealt round, with an extra hand in the middle of the table. This hand is called the Widow. The player next the dealer has the choice of retaining his hand or taking the Widow. If he retains his hand, he passes, and the player to his left has the same privilege; and so on all round. If the Widow be taken, the player taking it places his original hand in the middle of the table, face up, and the other players in turn may draw one or more cards from the exposed hand, replacing them with cards from their own. This may go on for an unlimited number of rounds until one player declares himself satisfied (this is usually done by knocking on the table); those after him may still continue to exchange cards, until it comes round to him again, when the hands are considered Called, and the highest wins. Any player may declare himself satisfied at any time, the first player to say, if he be a bold player, often doing so on a moderate hand, trusting that the others will not improve their hands by one drawing sufficiently to beat him. This game originated in the mining camps, where it was played in the same way, with the exception that no money or chips were used, but the lowest hand had to pay for the drinks—drink and whiskey being synonymous terms with the miners.

POKER-DICE.—Five dice must be used in this interesting variety of the game, and the stakes determined on must be put into the pot by each player, one, two, three, or as many chips as may be mutually agreed upon. The whole amount or pot goes to the best thrower. Any number of players may engage in poker-dice, each one to have three throws. When the game was first invented, two throws only were allowed the player, but the three-throw game is much the more interesting.

The entire five dice are cast at the first throw. Suppose the first thrower, there being no advantage in priority, throws this hand:

Two aces, deuce, a tray, and a four.

Now his game would be, of course, to leave his aces on the table and throw the other three dice, since it would be absurd for him to split his aces. Should he at the second throw turn out another ace, he has now three of a kind, and possibly at this throw he might turn out another pair with

his ace, making an ace full; or he might throw two more aces, making four of a kind; or three aces more, making five aces, the highest hand in poker-dice. It is possible with five dice to make a straight, say one, two, three, four and five, thus beating three of a kind. In short, the values run exactly as in the card game of poker. When two players with one pair each are tied, the next highest pip counts in favor of the pair with which it is associated. For example, if a player has a pair of aces and a three, four, and five, and the other player has a pair of aces and a two, three and a six, the six makes his hand the best and he takes the pot.

On the occasion of an even tie, a single throw between the two decides the winner.

A player is not bound to throw three times. It is his privilege to stand on any single throw, whether it be the first, second, or third.

THE FREEZE-OUT.—The freeze-out is so called because when it is played all the performers are left out in the cold, with the exception of one. It is a duel at cards. In a certain way it has its advantages, because it limits individual losses. The players each take the same number of chips, and the game closes when one player has won them all. For example, five players each take twenty chips. There are one hundred chips out. The freeze-out is ended when one of the party has the one hundred chips. The game is carried on under all the rules of poker, with, however, this exception, and that is in regard to the limit, for it never should be played without the limit. Say the limit is ten, one player or more is reduced to his last five chips. The player having the bulk of chips cannot then insist on the limit, he can only bet as many chips as his adversaries have. The freeze-out is not precisely a social game, because necessarily the players drop out one by one. At the conclusion of the game it is obvious that great caution is necessary. The last chips are carefully nursed. Jack-pots are not generally played in a freeze-out, but this is optional.

THE WIDOW, OR KITTY.—By the widow, or as it is more commonly known as "kitty," is meant a percentage, taken in chips at certain occasions during the game of poker. This percentage may be put to the account of the club where the game is being played, and defraye the cost of cards, use of chips, gas, attendance, etc. The kitty may, however, be introduced when no expenses occur. When three or better are made on a called hand, or when jack-pots are played, one chip is taken from the pool and put aside. These chips amount to quite a number at the end of the game. Then they may be either divided among the players or made into jack-pots, as a consolation stake, and so wind up the game.

BUCK.—Originally the buck was a pocket-knife passing always to the left, indicating only the deal. Perhaps from the handle of the knife being of buckhorn the term is derived. By a process of evolution, the buck in poker is made sometimes a representative of value, and can be put up by the age. It may designate a certain number of chips, say, for instance, five. Then, if the age makes his blind good, he puts up five more chips. The rest of the players, when they come in, do the same thing. The person who wins it,

when he is the age, puts up the buck. When the game is over, the person who has issued the buck redeems it, at the value he put on it.

In some cases the buck is used in order to induce the jack-pot, of course, by prior agreement. Whoever has the buck, when he deals, puts it on the table with two or more chips, and then all contribute to making a jack-pot. Whoever wins the jack-pot, when it is his turn to deal, puts it up, and another jack-pot is in order. Too many jack-pots in a game, or forced contributions, destroy the character of poker. They come in sufficient frequency under ordinary circumstances.

A knife is not an obligatory buck. In the Far West a revolver on the table sometimes serves the purpose of a buck.

MISTIGRIS.—The joker is used. The joker makes fifty-three cards in the pack. The mistigris, in a player's hand, entitles him to increase the value of his hand. If he has a pair, holding the mistigris makes them threes. With threes, the mistigris makes them fours. With two pairs, it converts the hand into a full. It has all latitude, makes straights, flushes, etc., etc. Sometimes its power is diminished, of course, by agreement, as in a full, increasing only the lower pair. All else is as in regular poker.

HOW GAMBLERS WIN

Before proceeding to illustrate the various means by which card-sharper make sure of large profits and quick returns, it is proper to state that this book is not intended for mere novices, but for persons who have a fair knowledge of the games to which it refers. The object in view is to explain the advantages played at cards, the reader being supposed to have the rudiments at his finger ends.

The game of which it is proposed to treat is strictly American in its derivation and character, and demands more nerve, judgment and self-possession, and greater quickness of the eye and hand than any other on the cards. We refer to

BLUFF, OR POKER

The different forms of this game, are Straight Poker, Draw Poker, Twenty-Deck Poker, Brag, etc., but the most common are "Straight," and "Draw," and of these we propose to treat. Although the reader is supposed to be familiar with the general rules of the game, yet as there are some points on which disputes frequently occur, it is well to refer to them and to state that they have been settled by competent authority as follows:

1. A player who miscalls his hand, does not for that reason lose the money staked, as every hand shows for itself, and must be taken at its full value.

2. No player has the right to go "blind" after the dealing has commenced. This rule, however, is rarely strictly enforced; a player being generally allowed to go blind if he wishes, before he looks at his cards, instead of before they are dealt.

3. Any player betting with six cards in his hand, loses; his opponent being entitled to the "ante," and all the money bet. If

more than one person is betting against him, then, of course, the best hand among his opponents wins the stakes.

4. Unless otherwise specified, every player has a right to a sight for his money, and a player whose pile has been overseen, or "oversized," as it is called, should he happen to have the best hand on a show, is entitled to the ante, and an amount from each of the players who bet over him, equal to the amount he has bet. The amount bet over his pile goes to the next best hand to his own.

There is another point on which differences often arise, which has never, we believe, been definitely settled, viz.: Whether a player when "called" is obliged to show his hand to the board. In our opinion he is, and for reasons which will appear sufficient to every sporting man. A certain sporting paper generally considered good authority has, however, decided that a player is only bound to show his hand to the antagonist who "calls," or pays to see it. The facilities which this restriction would give to two persons playing in partnership is obvious at a glance. We demur to the dictum, and think every intelligent player will agree with us.

THE SQUARE GAME

Nothing but practical experience, and good natural qualifications, can ever enable a Bluff player "on the square" to achieve success. Some persons can never become good players. They lack nerve, judgment and self-control, and without these nobody can win at Bluff.

There is one rule that the player at this game should particularly observe. He will soon perceive the advantage of doing so. Let him speak uniformly in betting and playing, in the same tone of voice; pick up his cards invariably with the same manner and at the same rate of speed; never touch them until they are all dealt, and never attempt to hurry the betting. A tremulous, or, on the other hand, a too determined voice often betrays a player's hand to a shrewd and watchful opponent. A drawing back of the hand, an uneasy movement in the seat, or a strained rigidity of the face or body will instantly be noticed by an expert, and the conclusions he draws from such indications will in most cases be correct. These remarks apply, of course, to the square game, not the game of advantages.

The best way of "betting a hand," and the only correct way, is to gather the cards up, after they are all dealt, make one quiet, uniform movement, conversing and proposing to bet in a low, unimpassioned tone of voice, and with an air of easy nonchalance, whether it be a "brag" or a big hand. As it is into the eye of his antagonist that the practiced player looks most keenly for information, it is of the greatest importance to prevent those expressive organs from telling tales.

The player, in his style of betting, should be governed by his knowledge of the parties with whom he is engaged. It is a usual thing with first-class players, when they have a high hand, and an opponent "raises" them, to throw in what is called a "coaxer;" in other words, to overlap the first "raise" very slightly, in order to get a second one, on obtaining which they bet heavily. With these few hints let us proceed to investigate the advantages to be obtained with the cards.

We shall commence with the simplest of all known methods of "stocking" the cards.

TOP STOCK

The dealer accomplishes this comparatively easy feat as follows: He places as many cards between the pair he wishes to "put up," as there are players besides himself. If there are four persons playing, including himself, he will insert three cards between the pair, and so on, accordingly as there are a greater or less number of players in the party. He then places on the top of the pair thus "put up," as many cards as there are players, exclusive of himself, so that the pair shall fall to his hand when he deals. If the dealer has a partner, sitting on his right, the latter either gives the cards a false cut or lets them run. If he has no partner he shifts the cut, as explained later under the head of "The Jog Stock." Three of a kind may be put up in this way if the dealer can contrive to get hold of the third card in the hands which are thrown up.

THE BOTTOM STOCK

This manoeuvre consists in putting up the pair as in the top stock, and placing them on the bottom of the pack. The cards are then so shuffled as not to disturb those on the bottom. If when they are cut it takes all the cards except the cut (which should be left on the table) to deal around, then the hand to which the last card falls will get the pair at the bottom, because the player who receives the bottom card has already received the other. But if the dealer sees that he will not get the bottom card himself he will, when he reaches the last two cards, shift them, giving the bottom one to the party who should receive the top one, and the top one to the next hand. This splits the pair, giving one to one player and the other to his left-hand neighbor. To play this advantage effectually it is necessary to have a partner who will cut deep enough, so that the bottom of the pack shall run off. The Bottom Stock affords a double chance of getting the pair, as it makes no difference to the dealer whether they fall to him or his partner. If the dealer has no partner, he contrives to sit next to the player who is in the habit of cutting deepest.

With an alert partner this "bottom stock," and a judicious "signing up" of hands between the confederates (only the strongest hand going in), is sure to beat a square game, however, skilfully played.

In cases where the parties played against have an inkling of the "bottom stock," the sharper puts the remainder of the pack on the top of the cut, leaving a break or "jog" (to be explained hereafter) over it, and thus dealing from the entire pack, which will tend to prevent or disarm suspicion. Sometimes an expert, after putting the pair on the bottom, will place another card underneath, so that the player who receives the next to last card, has the pair. This manoeuvre is apt to puzzle a suspicious opponent, who will be surprised to find that the hand which gets the last card does not get the pair. Two or three cards may be put at the bottom, as well as one, provided the dealer takes care to remember the number, so as to know when he reaches the last card of the pack.

THE JOG STOCK

This is what professional gamblers call a "good thing," and can be played on pretty sharp parties; but it cannot be executed without a partner. In performing it a pair is

put up by the dealer, as in the top stock, with the necessary number of cards on the top to make the pair fall to himself. He then, after shuffling once or twice, keeping the stocked cards on the top, slides a portion of the pack over the pair set up, leaving a narrow "jog" or break along the side, between such portion of the pack and the pre-arranged hand. His partner, who sits on his right, then seizes the cards on the top of the stocked hand by the ends, with the thumb and middle finger of his right hand. Then with the thumb and middle finger of his left hand, he seizes, in the same manner, the cards stocked underneath, and drawing the latter out, places them on the top of the others, leaving them as if they had not been cut.

The cautious crooked player, after winning once with his pair, gives them at the next deal to his partner, and then lets the cards run naturally once or twice, until he gets another pair to put up. This is what is called a "smooth thing," and when well done, beats a party easily and surely, without exciting suspicion. In playing this stock to a break, glazed cards with their backs prepared beforehand by rubbing them with fine sand-paper, are generally introduced. Cards that have thus been tampered with adhere together, and do not slip about in the shuffling; so that the sharper can set them to a fine break very evenly, and finds it much more easy to cut them off. Where two partners understand each other perfectly, they can often set up three of a kind; the right hand partner noticing what pair the dealer has, and, if possible, getting the third card in his own hand, or from the hands thrown up, and turning it to his coadjutor, with the requisite number of cards beneath. When the dealer permits the hand to run to his partner, the latter, if he wins and deals, places the hand on the bottom, so that it will run out on the bottom stock.

THE PALM STOCK

This manoeuvre requires great dexterity. If ineptly attempted, detection is almost sure to follow. The player, to execute it effectively should be on the left hand of the dealer. Having previously secured a pair of kings or aces, and while holding one in each hand so as entirely to conceal them, he requests the privilege, after the cards have been shuffled and cut, of cutting them again. He then grasps the pack in his right hand, palms one card of the pair on the top, and as he cuts leaves as many cards on the table as it is necessary to have between the pair to "put them up." Then seizing these cards with his left hand, he palms the other card of the pair on the top of them, and throws them on the top of the pack. This leaves the set up cards in such a position that they most necessarily fall to the dealer's first left-hand man. If this trick is executed too often it is sure to attract attention; but played judiciously it secures a very heavy percentage in the gambler's favor. Players always go a blind after executing the palm stock, and generally select the opportunity when there is a large "ante" up. It is not considered advisable to attempt this stock when the player has a partner, or when the "ante" is very small.

BUNNING UP TWO HANDS

When this feat can be accomplished, the game ceases to be a contest, its result being

certain success. Yet there are few parties upon whom a sharp carder cannot play off the deception once in a while. In executing it the player, if he has no partner, takes care to sit to the right of the "flattest" man at the board. When he observes that his left-hand neighbor is likely to win an "ante," he immediately passes out, and catching up the pack runs the hands up in the following manner: Selecting the man to whom he wishes to give a certain hand, containing for instance three tens, while he proposes to have a larger one—say three kings—he commences, as the cards face him, with his own hand; because, when the cards are turned over to deal, the first card as they face him, will be the last dealt, and as he sits to the right of the dealer, he will, of course, receive it. He now commences to run up the hands with a king (the cards being always supposed to face him), and places as many cards beneath that king as there are players on his right hand between himself and the player to whom he designs to give the three tens. Underneath those cards he places a ten, and below that as many cards as there are between himself and the player who is to receive the tens. These processes he repeats in the same order with each of the other kings and tens, which will bring the third ten to the bottom. He then turns the pack over, and, of course, the last ten becomes the uppermost card. Next he places as many cards on the top of it as there are players on the dealer's left, between the dealer and the person who is to receive the tens. To explain the operation intelligibly requires considerable space, yet with practice a good carder can execute it in ten or twelve seconds, which is about the time his left-hand man will take to bet for and win the "pot." Having thus made his preparations, the expert quickly gamblers in the hands as they are thrown up, places them under the deck and requests the privilege of shuffling before the dealer has an opportunity to do so. He then shuffles so as not to disturb the pre-arranged cards (see subsequent remarks under the head "False Shuffles"); and giving them a false cut desires the dealer to run them, which, if tolerably green, he will be almost sure to do. The expert will then receive his three kings, while the player he has "spotted" will get the three tens. After a little practice a nimble-fingered operator can without difficulty run up the other two cards which his man is to receive, so as to provide against all accidents.

To run up the hands effectually, however, the player requires a partner, who, when the cards are stocked, will give them a false shuffle, the player himself, at his partner's right, giving them a false cut, and his partner running them off. It may be supposed that few parties will allow this sort of dallying with the pack; but there is rarely a game in which a smart gambler, by judiciously selecting his opportunities, could not get up two or three of these hands during an evening.

Flushes, which appear at the first glance most difficult, are really the easiest hands to prepare. Thus, if a player wishes to get up an ace flush, while he gives his opponent a queen flush, he commences with an ace, as he commenced in the above-mentioned hands with a king, placing cards beneath to reach his adversary, as previously described. He then places a queen of any suit he may select, in the same relative position as the

ten in the other manoeuvre, and continues the same arrangement with the suits alternately, until five cards of each are set up. He then gives them a false shuffle and a false cut, and has them run off as already explained.

These hands enable the gambler to win so fast, and with such unerring certainty, that greedy "sports" sometimes give them out too often for their own interest; the party it is proposed to "pluck" getting frightened and declining to continue the game. Players who had they can victimize their man slowly and surely, seldom resort to these extreme measures, except at rare intervals. Feeling sure of winning any way, they think it better not to run the risk of frightening the "sucker" lest he should drop the game early, and only lose a few hundreds when he is pretty sure to lose thousands if more patiently handled. If the big hands appear too frequently the victim is apt to arrive at the conclusion that something is wrong and refuse to bet any more.

It is only when a gambler picks up an individual whom he wants to fleece in the quickest possible time, that he resorts systematically to such daring expedients.

Another way of getting up this class of hands, and one which often deceives sharp parties, is as follows: Two smart advantage players, operating as partners, keep the deal between them, two or three times in succession; meanwhile arranging the cards by degrees on the bottom, and when the arrangements are complete, transferring them to the top of the pack. Or they may be got up on the bottom and run off like a "bottom stock," the confederates, of course, knowing which is the best hand.

All this doubtless seems somewhat complex and difficult to the inexperienced reader, yet to a practical card deceiver, the various processes present no difficulties whatever. He literally "has them at his fingers' ends."

FLUSHES, FULLS AND FOURS

The favorite way with card sharpers, of giving out extraordinary hands, such as flushes, fulls, or four of a kind, is as follows: The player runs up ten cards of the same suit together, being careful in running them up, with the cards facing him, to make the highest card of the ten, either the second, fourth, sixth, eighth, or tenth from the start. He then places the ten cards on the top of the pack, and taking it in his left hand, with the forefinger of his right hand on the top and the thumb underneath, draws one card from the top and one from the bottom simultaneously, and throws them on the table together. (This manoeuvre, it should be remarked, is only for a four-handed game.) He repeats this draft ten times, throwing each two as they are drawn off upon the preceding ones. He then draws off the remainder of the cards in a similar way and throws them on the table at a little distance from the first twenty. Then he places those twenty upon the others, gives them a false shuffle and cut, and if the player's left-hand man is the dealer, as he must be to make this dodge successful, the player will receive the higher flush and the person opposite to him the smaller, both being of the same suit.

In getting up full hands in this way, they are first run up single-handed, the highest three being the second, fourth, and sixth

cards, counting from the start as the cards face the operator, who then "strips" out from the top and bottom, as with the flushes. The result is, that the larger full falls to the dealer's right, and the lesser to his left.

To stock four of a kind the hands are also run up separately, making the superior four the second, fourth, sixth and eighth cards from the start as the pack faces the player. Instead of being drawn off from the upper and lower surfaces ten times, they are only drawn off eight times. The larger fours will go to the dealer's right, the smaller to his left, as in the foregoing experiments.

STRIPPERS

Strippers are made by selecting two hands from the pack and trimming the sides of the remaining cards, so as to leave them a trifle narrower than the hands thus selected. The hands, which may be fulls, flushes, or fours, are then cut slightly convex at the sides. If flushes, ten cards of the same suit are required. If full hands, four small cards of a kind are picked out and two threes of a kind. This gives variety to the hands which are run off. The cards are then "worked" in the following manner: As the player shuffles, he feels along each side of the pack with the fingers and thumb of his right hand, and drawing the wider cards out, puts them on the top; when all the wide cards are uppermost, he divides the pack, and seizing each portion by the sides on the outer ends, depresses the inner ends, placing them evenly together. Then with a slight "flip" he shuffles them in, so that no two cards shall lie together, but alternately over and under through the entire pack. This process sets the hands up four-handed, so that they will run off to opposite players. A partner is a great help in playing with "strippers;" but if the sharp has no partner, and has the deal, he places one card on the top of the hands thus set up, so that the player opposite to him may receive one of the hands, and he the other. If the hands are flushes, the dealer does not, of course, bet unless he has the ace in his flush. If they are fulls the dealer's knowledge of their combinations informs him when his is the dominant hand. "Strippers," it should be here observed, can only be made available in a four-handed or single-handed game. In a single-handed contest, the player has only to "strip" the pre-arranged hands, without shuffling them in—shifting the cut on his own deal, and letting the cards run on his opponent's deal.

The most approved way of playing four-handed strippers with a partner is, after shuffling them in on the ends, as previously described, to set a jog or break over them, and let the partner uncover the hand by cutting to it. With regard to the different combinations of full hands and four of a kind, the advantage player follows a very simple rule. He knows what the ten "set up" strippers are, and on picking up his five will be aware, of course, of the value of the other five in his opponent's hand, and act accordingly. If, for example, the ten strippers consist of four fives, three aces, and three kings, and he gets a hand of three aces and two kings, he declines to bet, knowing of course that his adversary holds fives and a king.

BRIEFS

A "brief" is simply a pack kept out of the pack and trimmed convexly at the sides,

so that it can be distinguished by the touch, and cut off every time. When the expert stocks a hand, he sometimes places a "brief" on the top of it, and uncovers the hand by cutting the latter off. Briefs are used in nearly all short games, as well as in Poker.

"SECOND" DEALING

In order to play the "second" effectively, the operator trims one of his thumb nails to a fine point, with which as the game progresses, he gradually pricks the aces and kings on the face in the left hand corner of each, which, when they are turned over becomes of course the right hand corner. The cards are dealt from the end, the dealer seizing them by the corner with the thumb of the right hand. When one of the pricked cards is felt the dealer slips it back and deals from under it until he comes to himself, when he secures it for his own hand, thus gradually obtaining a pair of aces or kings, sometimes two pair, and more rarely, three of a kind. When well done this is one of the best "advantages" known, as it requires no partner, no stocking of the cards, admits of their being fairly shuffled, and "cleans out" a party with sufficient speed to satisfy the most rapacious.

BOTTOM DEALING

This method of "working" is so well known to the present generation that few expert gamblers think it safe to attempt it and will answer only with a particularly verdant customer, and in that case is played as follows: If the player has a partner in the game, he deals the bottom hand to him and then bets heavily himself. If a "call" is made, the partner attends to the caller. If not the partner lets the dealer win, who immediately puts the hand on the bottom and deals it to his partner again. If the sharp has no partner he deals the bottom hand to some one of the party and "holds out" a hand himself to beat it. It is dealt in various ways, from the end and from the side. This ruse cannot be so well described in print as to enable the reader to perform it, although the explanation may enable him to detect it.

CRIMPING

There are two ways of playing the "crimp" in the game of Poker; one, when the left-hand man deals, in the four-handed game, or the player's opponent, if the game be single-handed; the other on the player's own deal. In the former case, the player, after stocking a hand so that it shall fall to him, crimps or bends down on the sides the cards that compose it. Then, if the dealer shuffles over-handed, as many do, he will seldom break the hand, and the player can readily cut to it, as there will be a space between it and the cards above it.

In playing the crimp on his own deal, the expert waits until he has a big hand and then, after bending it down, as already described, places it at the bottom of the cards, and shuffles them so as not to disturb it. After dealing (laying his own cards as evenly as possible), he takes the crimped hand from the bottom of the deck with his left hand and with his right places the remainder of the pack on the top on his own cards. He then shoves them aside, at the same time raising the crimped hand and substituting it for the one he has thus covertly discarded. By selecting for this manoeuvre the time when the other players are picking up their

hands, a dexterous manipulator can generally accomplish it without detection.

COLD DECKS

The "cold deck" is a pack with the hands previously set up for the players and the dealer, which the latter "rings in" to supply the place of the pack being played with. There are several old-fashioned ways of making the substitution, such as dropping a bill on the floor and bringing up the "cold deck" after stooping as if to search for the money, etc. But these methods are clumsy. That of the "professional expert" is to raise the prepared pack from the lap to nearly the line of the table in the left hand, and when the true pack is cut, to draw the latter to the edge of the table with the right hand directly over the "cold deck," which at that instant is brought to the surface; the discarded pack being simultaneously dropped into the lap where a spread handkerchief is ready to receive it. Unless in the performance of this trick the disappearance of the one pack and the substitution of the other is accomplished as it were by one motion, detection is almost certain. After having dealt, the player folds up his handkerchief, with the cards inside, and puts it in his pocket.

HOLDING OUT

Gamblers consider this a dangerous experiment under any circumstances. It is rarely resorted to by one of the craft except on his own deal. The player having "got out" the hand he desires, throws the pack after dealing, on the top of his own hand and raises the other in its place. As he picks up the hand dealt to himself and "palming" it on the top of the deck, shoves the pack away, and raises the hand "held out." Some players "hold out" a hand in the lap, others in the coat collar behind the neck, and many in the joint of the knee. The sleeve, however, is generally the place selected by the thorough "artists," though it is the most dangerous for any but a practised and dexterous hand.

There is an instrument for "holding out," called "the bug," which is used by advantage players with remarkable success, and it is said has never been detected by any victimized party. It consists of an English awl with a smooth broad head on the butt, a piece of watch coil brazed to the side so as to run to the point and curl over. The point is pushed into the underside of the table exactly the width of a card from the edge, and the watch coil snaps up against the bottom of the table leaf. The player, having selected a high card, as a king or ace, slides it under the table between the leaf and the elastic coil, which holds it firmly. When he receives in regular course of dealing one card or a pair of the same denomination as the one he has in the "bug," he brings his hand of cards to the edge of the table and with his thumbs under the leaf raises the ace or king from the "bug," thus obtaining a pair or three of a kind. He then slips a card from his hand into the "bug." This arrangement is considered a capital thing by advantage players. There is little risk of discovery in working it, as one card is not likely to be missed from the pack.

Springs and other appliances are used in various ways in "holding out," but the "bug"

is the simplest and most easily operated, and therefore the most successful of them all.

FALSE SHUFFLES

Nearly every card strategist has his own peculiar style of shuffling, but the only scientific one is what is technically called the intricate shuffle. It consists in "ripping" the cards and pushing the two halves of the pack entirely through each other, drawing them out at the ends, and throwing the top half on the top as before. Some players shuffle only the lower portion of the pack, leaving the top cards undisturbed, and concealing them from view by keeping three fingers between the pack and their opponents. Others shuffle the cards quickly without disturbing the top and give them a double false cut, which keeps the same cards uppermost, and seems to the unpractised eye perfectly fair. It requires a keen and a practical knowledge of the operation to detect false shuffling when adroitly executed.

FALSE CUTS

It is only necessary to refer to two of these, as in the other varieties the distinctions scarcely amount to differences. In the "overhanded cut" the player seizes about one-third of the pack with his right hand, and half the remainder in his left, bringing them towards him. He then drops those in his right hand on that portion of the deck left on the table (still keeping his hand on them), throws those in his left hand over and beyond the others, and finishes the cut by throwing those in his right hand on the top. The "double cut" is executed by drawing the middle of the pack out at the end with the middle finger and thumb, and then, as they are brought to the top of the deck, catching the cards which were originally uppermost with the third finger and lower part of the thumb, drawing them out at the end and placing them on the top again. It will be seen that in both these cases the cuts leave the cards exactly in the same state as if they had not been cut at all. It is the same also with the false shuffles.

SHIFTING THE CUT

There are a dozen different ways of executing this feat. Some players shift the cut with one hand by sliding the pack quickly along the table under the cut, and catching it up with the thumb. The neatest method of performing this delicate operation with two hands is this: in the first place, the cards must be in a certain position in the operator's hands. They must be brought into this position by leaving a "break" on the side between the cut and the deck, or by lowering the deck on the cut with the thumb and fingers on the ends, leaving a small space between the two portions of the deck. The player then places the deck on the palm of his left hand, the thumb against the inside edge, inserts the little finger between the deck and cut on the outside edge, and brings the other three fingers on the top of the whole; then holding the lower part of the pack on the ends with the thumb and finger of his right hand, he draws with the fingers of his left, the upper portion of the cards downwards and under the others—bringing the cut to the top and elevating the lower portion in his right hand at a slight angle, so as to allow those intended for the bottom to pass under. Long practice, superadded to great natural dexterity, is required to perform this complex movement well.

CONVEXES AND REFLECTORS

The "convex" is of various forms, and has been brought to a high degree of perfection. Originally it was a rude affair, consisting merely of a convex piece of brightly-polished silver, about the size of a nickel cent. This the player placed before him, concealing it from observation as much as possible with a roll of bills in front. Being convex, it of course reflected whatever was held above it at any angle, and the player dealing over it could see the faces of his adversary's cards. Great improvements have been made on the original implement. The article now in use is attached to the end of a slender bar, which is fastened at the opposite end into a joint in which there is a spring. The player places this apparatus on the top of a few bills and then covers it entirely with other bills. As he deals, he suffers his hand to rest carelessly on the joint, and as he touches the spring the convex flies out towards him and reflects the faces of the cards. When the deal is completed he removes his hand from the joint, and the convex reverts to its former position. Instead of using silver, as formerly, the manufacturers of the instrument now use glass, which reflects more brilliantly. Convexes are also made of larger size, to attach to the coat, the knee, etc., being in those cases fastened with a pin.

Reflectors are on a similar principle, but are generally magnifiers. They may be placed on the lap, on the knee, or may be fastened into the side of a table so as to let down with a spring. There are many ingenious forms of the reflector and players who know all about the old styles are frequently beaten by new ones. A few years ago, two players who had had many bouts at cards without either gaining the advantage, met one afternoon to play single-handed Poker. Both parties were acquainted with the principle of the reflector, but one of them was sharp enough to affix the article to the heel of his boot, and throwing one leg over the other and turning one foot up, he soon succeeded in breaking his antagonist.

"PAPER"

Marked cards, or "paper," as they are technically called, are a very great "advantage," where they are "got in" on a party, and in single-handed games are as strong odds as a player can have in his favor. They are generally marked for the suit as well as the size, but the size is the principal thing in Straight Poker. The player, as he deals, reads and remembers his opponent's hand, and is thus enabled, when both have good hands and he (the dealer) the best, to "bet it up" with more judgment. When he has nothing and his antagonist has a small pair, he can drive him out; and when he has good cards, but not as good as his adversary's, he can refrain from betting. Thus he has the whip hand every way. In a party also, an accomplished "second" dealer can use "paper" instead of resorting to pricking the cards, and deal himself aces and kings, or, if the cards are marked for suit, as they usually are, he can deal flushes from sight, and will be able when four or five are playing to bring them out more than half the time. "Paper" is useful to the professional in every other game, as well as in Straight Poker.

OF PARTNERSHIPS

Professional gamblers often, indeed usually, work in partnership, two or more players

conspiring to beat a party and divide the proceeds. When the confederates thoroughly understand each other, the advantages of the partnership are immense. They signal or "sign up their hands" to each, so that the larger hand alone may "go in." They can also, by sitting together, shuffle, cut, run up hands for each other, give or receive hands from the bottom, take care of each other's rejected cards in "holding out," and do many other things tending to render them invincible. Two gamblers thus working in concert on the mutual insurance principle, of course watch each other attentively, and are governed in their playing by a pre-arranged telegraphic system. The whole art and mystery of playing in partnership cannot be explained in print. It may be mentioned, however, that the motto of each member of the firm is to watch the other as closely as if they were opponents, and woe to the verdant individual who gets between the upper and nether millstone of such a coalition.

DRAW POKER

Although played to a considerable extent in the Middle and Eastern States, Draw Poker is more especially a Western game; a little "draft" being a favorite amusement among sporting men in all the Northwestern and Southwestern States.

All the cheats practised at Straight Poker are practicable in this game, and a few extra dodges besides.

When quick work is to be made with a victim, "pat hands," in other words, hands which fall complete, as flushes, fulls, or four of a kind, are given out; but as such "sharp, short and decisive" practice is apt to excite suspicion, old hands usually avoid it. As at Draw Poker, the most common way of "compelling fortune" at the game is by

STOCKING FOR A DRAFT

In performing this operation the player, if he is himself the dealer, places three of a kind, five or six cards of a suit, or any other hand he chooses, together without any cards between them, and then so shuffles them in that when the cards are cut and an average number of players "chip in" and make their drafts, he can draw the pre-arranged hand, or such portion of it as he may want. The cheat is somewhat stale, and "suckers" are generally on the lookout for it. On this account (and also because one person more, or less, coming in and making a draft, may spoil the arrangement), this advantage is seldom attempted by a finished professional—nevertheless if very neatly played it is often effective.

DOUBLE DISCARD

This is an advantage peculiar to Draw Poker, and inapplicable to any other game. Once detected it may be considered a "dead cock in the pit" as far as the party making the discovery is concerned, for a child once burned with this species of fire is not likely to permit his fingers to be scorched a second time. Any inept manipulator who may attempt this sleight will be likely to come to grief, and indeed the same may be said of advantage playing generally. Only the expert can make sure of success, and to become an expert demands as much practice and attention as would be required to learn an ordinary mechanical trade. Is the game worth the candle? If the professional

gamblers of the country would respond to this question truthfully, the majority of them would say no. But to return to the Double Discard. It is played, usually, with two pair or a four flush in the natural hand. The player does not discard until he makes his draft. He separates his odd card from the two pair or the four flush, holding it in his left hand, and the two pair or the four flush in his right, ready to discard. Calling for four cards, he drops the four in his right hand—we will suppose them to be a flush—immediately in front of him. He then lifts the draft with his odd card, and if he finds in the draft a card of the same suit as the four flush, he retains it and discards four cards again. Then dropping the one retained upon the four originally rejected, he raises the hand and of course has five cards of a suit! This manoeuvre requires great adroitness, and discreet advantage players only resort to it now and then, inasmuch as a flush or a full is a hand too "hefty" to be lifted often in a four-card draft without acting as an eye-opener. Miracles having ceased, calculating gamblers do not consider it wise to indulge in a series of startling effects, which must necessarily be either of miraculous or immoral origin.

SHIFTING THE CUT AFTER DEALING

In shifting the cut after dealing and before the draft, the operator generally has a partner at the left to receive the hand. In fact, the thing cannot be done neatly without such aid. The dealer gets three of a kind on the top of the pack in shuffling, and leaving the cut on the table deals from the remainder. After the deal he draws the cut off the table from the right, shifts the cut with the "hinge" movement, and drops the pack into his left hand, ready for his partner to draw. Old hands say that "suckers" or "greenhorns"—the terms are convertible—are readily and certainly taken in by this bit of chicane. Nor is it used on simpletons only; experienced players are not unfrequently its victims. Whoever can execute this piece of hocuspocus in a masterly style will have an immense advantage over square players in all card games, for there is not one of them in which it cannot be introduced with ruinous effect. We earnestly advise young players to look out for it, but our counsel will probably be thrown away, seeing that parties who have grown gray in the service of the goddess Fortune, and think they are conversant with all the tricks and traps of card-sharps are often "cleaned out" by adepts in the art of "shifting the cut."

THE "BUG"

This instrument is more effective, if possible, in Draw, than in Straight Poker. In the former the player does not of course raise his reverse card from the "bug" until he has made his draft, so that he has two chances to match it—first from his natural hand, and failing that, from his draft.

The mode in which gamblers use the little implement, has been explained under the head of "Straight Poker." It is the same in the Draw game, the only difference in the hands being, that there will be more flushes and full hands in the former than in the latter.

RUNNING UP HANDS

The modus operandi of this manoeuvre are not exactly the same in Draw Poker as in Straight, and the facilities for executing it are much greater in the Draw game, as the

deal and ante pass round. In the latter nearly every player "chips" on a small pair, hoping to make a fortunate draft. It is therefore a good move for the sharper to run up a single hand either for himself or for his partner, if he has one, inasmuch as almost every one will come in, and he is sure of getting calls on every hand. He seldom, however, bets as heavily as he would bet at the Straight game under similar circumstances, well knowing that he may be beat by the draft, which of course he cannot control. We have seen three queens beaten by a player who had come in on a pair of deuces and drawn another deuce and two sevens. The sharp generally avails himself of the opportunity of his right-hand man's deal to run up a hand. Passing out he gathers up the discards and sets up three of a kind. If he has a pair of any sort in his hand, he can easily make it a triplet from the rejected cards, and having done this he has only to shift the cut.

MARKED CARDS

Known in gambling-house as "paper," are considered articles of prime utility in Draw Poker, but are not used in the same manner as in the Straight game. Instead of reading the hands of his opponents, the dealer, if expert enough, deals a second from sight, giving himself a pair or three of a kind. After the deal, and while giving the players their drafts, if he happens to see a card on the top which will suit his hand, he deals from under it, until his own turn comes, when he deals it to himself, and thus makes up his three or four of a kind, or flush, or "bobtail," as the case may be.

Even where a player cannot deal a second, marked cards are of a vast importance to him, as more than half the time he can draw to some card in his hand, securing two pair to a certainty, with a possibility of the next card giving him a full. To a professional who deals a good second, "paper" is perhaps the most profitable of all "advantages," simply drawing to a "bobtail" or odd card being enough to swamp the chances of any honest player, however skillful. If the sharper has a four flush, he is almost certain in dealing to come to the suit card he needs; and even if not a second dealer, he can easily slip it back, and give it off the draft cards. Some sharps make the game strong to a fault by playing the "bug" while the deal is going around, and "paper" on his own deal. People don't, however, believe quite so much in extraordinary luck as they used to do, and the gambler who has miraculous hands very frequently soon becomes unpopular. Even if not detected he is looked upon as an ugly customer whom it is better to avoid. The advice of veteran artful dodgers of the card-sharpening fraternity to the pupils whose young ideas they are teaching to shoot in the wrong direction is generally, "don't try to do too much, but what you attempt try to do well." Good advice this if it were given in the interest of honest industry, instead of in furtherance of evil.

In the preceding remarks we have set forth the "advantages" particularly applicable to Draw Poker. Experts, however, continue to work into that game most of the trickery used in Straight Poker, such as crimping, taking hands from the bottom, holding out, palming, etc., etc., the only difficulty being that the draft is liable to beat them—not

that such a result is very probable, but it is certainly quite possible.

Sometimes Old Nick seems to desert the advantage player for a time, and take sides with honesty and veridancy, but this is a rare thing, and when it happens the freak does not last. He soon returns to his old friends.

Against card-playing on the square, as an amusement, no valid argument can be advanced. It is healthful and necessary to give the brain a holiday now and then, throwing

care to the winds. We work too hard in this country, and take too little recreation, as it is, and the bigotry that would deprive us of such pleasant excitement as may be derived from a fair game of cards, deserves to be scouted. But let every gentleman steer clear of gambling houses and of gamblers.

Having now done our best to put the reader on his guard against the devices of professional card-sharpers, by showing up as clearly as it is possible to do in a treatise of this kind, the deceptions to which they customarily resort, we now bid him adieu.

THE END